# ABOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT

ARCHBISHOP GOODIER, S.J.

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*By the Most Reverend*

ALBAN GOODIER, S.J.

ARCHBISHOP OF HIERAPOLIS

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# PREFACE

IN the days of his youth and early studies the writer of this little book often felt the need of some short account of the Old Testament which would be a guide to him in his reading of the Bible. Knowing that others have experienced the same need, he has tried here to supply it. He hopes that his work will be found a convenient textbook for individual readers and for schools.

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# ABOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT

## PART I.—THE CANONICAL OLD TESTAMENT

### I.—INTRODUCTION

#### 1. The Reading of the Old Testament

IT is often said that Catholics do not encourage the reading of the Bible. In one sense this is true, in another sense it is not. It is further said that we Catholics know less about the Bible than do other non-Catholic Christians.

Let us begin by examining the first of these statements. St Peter in his Second Epistle says very plainly to the people of his time: "We have the more prophetical word: whereunto you do well to attend, as to a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts; understanding this, that no prophecy of scripture is made by private interpretation" (2 Pet. i 19, 20).

By prophecy it must be remembered that St Peter does not understand what we mean by the word; to him, and to those for whom he wrote, "prophecy of scripture" rather means the teaching contained in Scripture. Again, at the end of the same Epistle he speaks of "our most dear brother Paul," and he says of him: "our most dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, hath written to you: as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction. You, therefore, brethren, knowing these things before, take heed, lest being led aside by the error of the

unwise, you fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Pet. iii 15-17).

From these two passages alone it must be quite clear that St Peter did not approve of promiscuous and unguided reading of the Bible. Like every other book, more especially like every book belonging to a different age and a different people from ourselves, most of all, like every ancient book treating of religion, the Bible must contain very much that needs interpretation, much that is utterly unintelligible to the ordinary reader; and to read it without guidance can for most be nothing but a sheer waste of time, must for many produce only confusion, error, and even perhaps "their own destruction."

In this St Peter is saying nothing new. Even in his own time, among the Jews themselves, to whom the Old Testament was the one sacred source of religion, promiscuous reading of the Bible was anything but approved. The people read it as it was interpreted to them; there were schools of Scribes to explain it, the most elaborate commentaries were written, in the temples and synagogues its discussion was a part of religious observance, the very sacredness of the text was a warning to all that it could not be read lightly, but that its real meaning lay beneath the surface, to be reached, not by casual reading only, but by long meditation, and prayer, and study, and a mind in sympathy with the mind of God its Author. But if that was the practice of the Jews, how much more must it have been that of the Christian! And how much more again must it be our own, who have lost so many keys that the Jews possessed, and to whom the very language has become a riddle!

There is a further reason, hinted at by St Paul, which confirms this attitude of Catholics to the Holy Bible. He is writing to Timothy, who has been appointed a bishop, and he is giving him advice about his office. In the midst of this comes the following passage, which deserves to be quoted at length. He says:

" Evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse: erring and driving into error. But continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee: knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and because from thy infancy thou hast known the holy scriptures, which can instruct thee to salvation, by the faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work. I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by his coming and his kingdom: Preach the word; be instant, in season and out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time when they will not endure sound doctrine; but according to their own desires they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables " (2 Tim. iii 13 to iv 4).

This passage cannot be mistaken. St Paul dreads the misuse of Scripture as much as does St Peter; he anticipates the saying of Shakespeare: " The devil can quote Scripture to his purpose." He adds another warning; to the Christian the Old Testament appears in a totally new light from that in which it appears to his Jewish neighbour; for to the Christian the Old Testament has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and therefore needs a careful adjustment. The Messias promised in the ancient books has come; now we can understand much that we could not understand before, but only by careful and accurate study, and this St Paul rejoices to think his disciple Timothy can do for his people because of his " knowledge of the holy scriptures " on the one hand, and on the other his " Faith in Christ Jesus."

These are sufficient reasons, even if she had no others, to justify the Church in not being enthusiastic about making her children read the Bible: to all it would be a

great waste of time; to most it would be utterly misunderstood; many, for want of proper guidance, would draw from it quite the wrong conclusions, as they must from all books written and read under similar circumstances. But this does not prevent her from encouraging Bible reading and Bible study. The priest and interpreter of her word should have it constantly before him; the faithful should, as far as it is possible, not only learn the Bible narrative, but have interpreted to them the spirit that lies underneath. Indeed, in the early days of the Church, this was the favourite subject chosen by her preachers; the early Fathers are never tired of expounding the meaning of the Bible to their people.

And it is this spirit more than anything else that matters most to us. To the patient mind, to the mind that will stop and meditate, it becomes gradually clear; many a less trained saint catches it better than the profoundest scripture scholar. But for most of us time and opportunity are wanting; we must be content to receive it reflected by others instead of searching for ourselves, as St Thomas Aquinas so well says. This understanding of the Bible the Church strongly recommends; and we believe, so understood, the Bible is as well known to us as it is to others.

## 2. What is the Old Testament?

If we may divide mankind into various civilisations, it may be said that each civilisation has its sacred books; these books have been more or less the product of their respective civilisations, and, on the other hand, by these books the civilisations have developed along their own lines. Some great thinker, usually some great spiritual and religious thinker, has expressed in his life, and put down in writing, some great principle that has affected many others; and from his time all that he has written has been treasured as a sacred heirloom by generations

of followers who have gloried in calling him their Master, and have used his words as their guide, their standard of life, the basis of that civilisation which they have adopted.

Among all ancient civilisations, though the least in extent and apparent influence, yet by far the oldest and most consistent was the civilisation of the Jewish people; most consistent in this, if in nothing else, that no other ancient civilisation has been so crushed down and has yet endured, none other has so grown to more and more, without ever standing still. And during the whole period of their growth their sacred books grew alongside; unlike most others, perhaps all others, they did not depend upon one inspired leader, but had "Abraham for their father," Moses for their lawgiver, Elias and the prophets for their guides, and many more in succeeding generations for their teachers. As the ages rolled on their sacred books grew steadily, consistently, however different their substance.

In this at least they surpass all other series of sacred books, that they are at once more varied and more consistent, more like a united chain drawn across the nation's history.

But in another respect do these books differ from others of their kind, and that is in the extraordinary reverence in which they were held by the Jewish people. In the truest sense they were taken to be the Word of God; the actual human author was ignored, and for the most part forgotten; their standard of literature, their fragmentary nature, was of quite secondary account; among themselves the Jews were satisfied that in these books God himself, and not merely man interpreting God, had spoken to them, and hence in them they had an infallible guide both for the search after truth and as a standard by which they might live.

At length came Jesus Christ into the world; and with regard to these sacred books he did three things. First, he not only confirmed the Jews in their extraordinary

reverence for and belief in their Scriptures; he even strengthened their conviction; he said that he had come "not to destroy but to perfect" this belief. Next he declared that the teaching of these books was completely fulfilled in himself; he used them to confirm his authority, he built his own doctrine upon them, he showed that what the Jews themselves held to be the most sacred message they contained was the foreshadowing of himself, the Messiah, the last and greatest of the sons of Abraham, of the lawgivers, of the prophets. And thirdly, while he wrote no book himself, he gave to his followers certain doctrines and instructions which, with the story of himself, were the basis of further books; and these books, for those who believe in Jesus Christ, have been taken as sacred.

This, then, constitutes the Bible as the Christian understands it. Obviously it is in two parts: the first part, the Old Testament as we now call it, consisting of the forty-five books written or compiled during the ten centuries before the coming of Christ; the second part, the New Testament, containing the twenty-seven books written after. Their subject is most varied; they contain law, history, prophecy, wisdom, song, religious doctrine, standards of moral life; they are written by most different hands, learned and unlearned; they are in different languages, the Old Testament for the most part in Hebrew, the New Testament in Greek; in many the individuality of the human author is strongly marked; time, place, circumstance, national conditions have all concurred to bring into them the most diverse colours and effects and points of view.

Yet what strikes the most ordinary reader is not their diversity but the unity that runs through them all. There is unity of teaching, growing it may be, but always consistent and the same; unity of facts and of interpretations, unity of spirit, unity of religious mind. And the centre of that unity is clear, it is the person of Jesus Christ.

From the first of the books of the Old Testament to the last, the finger points to the coming Messiah; the New Testament looks back to the Old, shows that the promise has been fulfilled, and declares the good tidings and its fruits.

This, then, is the Bible, whether it be considered as one book, or as made up of its many parts; a marvellous record, to say the least, of a nation's religious mind and religious development; a record the like of which is nowhere else to be found. But now the Christian goes further; not only does he call the Book sacred because it contains this sacred record, but he holds that the unity has been maintained by more than human power. In other words, the books of the Bible are not merely the work of human hands; they are the handiwork of God himself, the means by which he has communicated himself to men, guided them through the darkness and mists of human learning, enlightened them with knowledge beyond human power to attain, built up for them ideals of which they could never have dreamt. By whatever means the writers arrived at their knowledge, under whatever circumstances they wrote, the Spirit of God was always with them, directing them, enlightening them, so that in a real sense it was not they who wrote but the Spirit himself.

This in brief is what is meant by the Bible being inspired. It is the Word of God in the strictest sense of that term, and it finds its climax, its final seal, in the personality of Jesus Christ. Belief in the one goes hand in hand with belief in the other: if Jesus Christ is God, then emphatically the Bible is the Word of God; if the Bible is the Word of God, then emphatically Jesus Christ is God; if either alternative is called into doubt, then we are left with a phenomenon which no human ingenuity can explain.

But further; if the Bible contains the Word of God, then human reason itself will demand that it should not

be left to its fate, to be torn to pieces by the wranglings of men, to be misunderstood and misinterpreted, to be made of even less account than the wisdom of common men. The tradition of this Word must imply a guardian of that tradition; an authoritative voice which shall say what is and what is not part of the Written Word, what is and what is not right interpretation. "God," says man to himself, "cannot have spoken to all the world, and then left all the world with no means of knowing whether or not he has understood aright; to do so would leave man in no better condition, nay more, would only give to man further matter for discord and misunderstanding. For what is of itself beyond the power of man to discover must be beyond the power of man to interpret safely."

This is the significance of the infallible Church; as Jesus Christ himself is the seal set upon the Bible, so the Church of God on earth is the necessary authority which prevents, and alone can prevent, that seal from being broken. The three must go together: "a triple cord is hardly broken"; the Word has come from God, Jesus Christ has given us its definite interpretation, he has founded his Church that through all time that interpretation may not be lost or scattered.

## 3.—The Making of the Old Testament

No matter who we may be, or what may be our creed, we must all concede that the book which is known as the Bible is one of the most remarkable books in the world. No other book has had so much study spent upon it, no other has had such influence on the history of mankind; it has stood the test of time, it has survived the severest criticism, and it remains today the object of veneration of more than three hundred millions of people, the source from which they profess to derive all their spiritual outlook and spiritual inspiration. It must therefore be worth

our while, whether we be believers in the Bible, or men of letters with an interest in the literature of the world, or merely men curious to know what are the things that have most influenced mankind, to know something about this book, where it came from, how it was written, what it contains, what is the value of its contents, why it is held so sacred, on what grounds it is placed by Christians above and apart from every other book that the brain of man has produced.

To begin with, we must remind ourselves that though we speak of the Bible as one book, in reality it is made up of many; and these were written, not by a single author or in a single generation, but by a succession of writers whose dates stretch over perhaps sixteen hundred years of time. Sixteen hundred years is a very long period; many a nation has not lived so long, probably no language has endured so long without being radically changed; our own English tongue, as we now speak it, has a history of but six hundred years, and even after that lapse of time it is found so altered that a book written in the thirteenth century will scarcely be understood by a reader in the twentieth. When we add to this that the people among whom the books were written had a singularly broken career, that their very nationality was broken up, enslaved, restored again, in a way that it would be hard to parallel, that during these changes they lost their original language, and even their original written traditions, we wonder all the more how the books, making up the one Book, could ever have been written and preserved at all, let alone could have kept such a uniform spirit and teaching as would entitle them to be looked upon as one rather than as many.

For consider the vicissitudes of the people. Founded by Abraham and his family about the year 2000 B.C., it wandered from Mesopotamia into the land of Canaan. Two hundred years later it was driven by famine to settle in Egypt. Here gradually it sank into poverty,

and was oppressed by the rulers of the country; until, some four hundred years afterwards, it was delivered by the leadership of Moses. For forty years, a whole generation, it wandered about in the desert without a settled home; then at last it entered and conquered Canaan, and made of it the land of the Israelites. This was about the year 1400 B.C. For three or four hundred years the nation was one and undivided; then a schism came, the nation was divided into two, each with its own king and its own interests, and each with its own special history.

Then came pressure from without. In the North the great Empire of Assyria was carrying all before it, and the kingdom of Israel, the more northern of the two divisions just mentioned, was brought under its sway. The kingdom was destroyed, the people were carried off to captivity or dispersed, about the year 750 B.C. Israel had entirely ceased to exist, and that included ten of the original twelve tribes of Israel. Less than two hundred years later, the same fate befell the southern kingdom, that of Juda. The Empire of Babylon had overcome that of Assyria; it, too, wished to extend its conquest; Juda was overcome, Jerusalem, the sacred city, was levelled to the ground, and the people were taken into exile, to obey and serve their Babylonian masters in a strange land.

Another hundred years and another change came. The conquerors of the Assyrians were in their turn subdued; the Persians defeated the Babylonians, and a better day dawned for the downtrodden Jews. A decree was issued permitting them to return to the land of their fathers and to rebuild their sacred city; parties of them struggled back, a mere insignificant handful as compared with the nation which, a hundred years before, had been carried away, and from this tiny and stricken root the new nation of the Jews began to grow. Gradually it spread itself over the land; the old books were re-

discovered, the old rites were revived, men remembered the greatness of their fathers and endeavoured to revive it; and though from that time to the coming of Christ they had still much to suffer from invasion, and oppression, and civil war, still they held together, and built themselves up into a people, prepared for the coming of the Lord.

When we look at this people, with a career so varied and broken, wandering to and fro, at one time utterly annihilated as historians might have supposed, and even in its resurrection scarcely to be recognised, we may well wonder that it should have preserved its traditions, and its law, and its writings intact, and should have been able to carry on the series unbroken. When we add to this that, partly on account of its vicissitudes, partly on account of the lapse of time, the old, original language had become unintelligible to the multitude, that the ancient books had been lost and, when found again, were with difficulty understood; when we remember that writing was then by no means the easy thing it is today, that the materials were less lasting, that the alphabet itself was less capable of expressing spoken words, the wonder at the unity of this marvellous book, written during the course of these broken sixteen hundred years, preserved and understood in spite of all these adversities, giving new life to a nation every time it is taken up and studied, grows upon us until even the most unbelieving must ask himself whether there can be a parallel in history, whether this is humanly possible, whether the very story of its composition, and of its preservation, is not of itself evidence enough that the Book is in the keeping of other hands than those of men.

Such were the people who wrote the Bible, and under such circumstances it grew; let us now look at the making of the Book itself, so far as the best scholarship of our time is able to explain it to us. Scholarship has tradition to guide it; it has the books themselves, and their content

by means of which to test tradition; occasionally it gets some light from facts discovered in other ways. As a conclusion of its studies it seems to say:

From the earliest times there were traditions, handed down from generation to generation, whether written down or not is of minor importance. These traditions culminated in Moses, the deliverer of the people from Israel, and the real founder of the independent nation; he wrote down their law, and collected their history; the tradition which attributes the first five books fundamentally to him seems to be confirmed by much internal evidence. These books of Moses were the original Bible; they were called the Law; they were preserved in the Tabernacle, perhaps added to from time to time as circumstances demanded; upon them the nation was built.

As time went on records gathered, of one event or another, one person or another; these again were brought together, selections were made and arranged, and editions or books were made from time to time. Such of these books as were considered of special religious or national value were set apart and added to the books of the Law; they constituted another portion of the Bible. At the same time, during the many ups and downs of the nation, in their days of falling away from God, men rose up to warn them of the evils that threatened them, to stir them to their duty; these were the prophets, whose sermons and warnings were afterwards in part collected, and added with the histories to the Canon of the Bible.

Meanwhile a third division was growing. The services in the Temple and the other rites had called for music and hymns; these hymns had led to other songs; and there grew up a collection of these songs, which were duly approved, and made what we now call the Book of Psalms. And alongside of these were certain volumes, some from one author, others apparently drawn from many sources, in which the wisdom and instruction of many different ages was collected; these were added to the rest, and

with the Psalms, and some biographies, or accounts of single events, constituted the third part of the Bible of the Hebrews.

## 4. The Contents of the Old Testament

We have seen that the history of the Jews, their wanderings, their infidelities, their internal dissensions, their captivity, the long period of more than a thousand years over which it was spread was not a promising ground upon which a world literature might be developed. We have seen, again, that their language, varying as it did within and necessarily affected from without by the influence of conquering neighbours, the first expression of it rendered unintelligible to those of later generations, was anything but conducive to consistency of thought, or evenness of development, in a nation which, compared with those around it, was always of second importance. Nevertheless, we have seen that among this very people the one Book was written, or the forty-five books which all have come to look upon as one which is the most complete record of a nation's growth, and with which the record of any other nation bears no comparison.

When we take up a Catholic Bible we may at first see little order in the books which are included in the Old Testament. But a closer observation will show that there are really three main divisions, the historical books coming first, then the books which may be called poetical and didactic, thirdly the collection of all the prophets; there follow at the end, as a kind of appendix, the Books of Machabees, relating an important event of more recent history. These three main divisions may be subdivided. First, in the first five books, or the Pentateuch, whose authorship is attributed to Moses himself, we are told of the giving of the Law, and the foundation and settlement of the Hebrews in the Promised Land; then we follow them during the period of their government by spiritual

rulers, or judges; then comes the period of the kings till both the kingdoms are destroyed; at the end is the story of the Restoration, and the rebuilding of the Holy City.

When the history as a background is completed, the Bible, as we have it, next takes the poetical books. First comes the intense drama, the Book of Job, that picture of a single character facing the problem of existence, with his friends chanting round him as a chorus—a distinct anticipation of that form of poetry which gave rise to the Greek tragedy. Then there are the hundred and fifty psalms, written over a space of close upon a thousand years, the record of the heart of a people's faith, strikingly the same during all that long and broken time. Corruption within the state does not alter the spirit of these songs; oppression from without only alters the tone, now of sadness and appeal, now of joy and thanksgiving; but the soul of the music remains the same, so that one is not surprised at the tradition which said that they were all written by one man. After the songs proper come the various Books of Wisdom, the collections of wise men made from time to time; they are a fitting conclusion to the poetical section, for wisdom is at the least akin to poetry. The collection of the prophets, records of their exhortations, warnings, condemnations, and encouragements, given to the people chiefly in the days of their unfaithfulness, is again, as it were, a retelling of the history of the Jews, looked at from another angle.

This is in brief the content of the Old Testament. The history of the Jews is, as it were, traversed three times: first historically, certain landmarks being given, and chains connecting them with one another; then poetically, the music of the years being heard in drama, in song, in words of wisdom; last prophetically, the voice of a nation's conscience ringing out, in condemnation when it sins, in encouragement when it repents, its eyes always kept upon the light which shines ahead. Even if there were no other bond of union to make the separate

books one, this would surely suffice. The thread running through them all is one, the impress of all is the same. Not if the same human hand had written every word could there have well been a greater uniformity of thought, and spirit, and outlook.

But there is more than this historical aspect which blends all the parts of the Bible into one. For they are much more than the accidental milestones along the road of a nation's journey through the ages; they are at the same time a record of that nation's growth, of its development beneath the hand of God, of its training in success and adversity, willingly and against its will, until " the fulness of time " when the fruit of that training was to be given to all the world. This, one would venture to say, is the special significance of the Old Testament; in this it stands alone from every other national literature; no other nation in the world has left behind it so complete, so consistent an account of the way it has emerged " from darkness into the incorruptible light."

More than this. Not only does the Bible stand apart as a record of a nation's development, but that development itself is a thing unique, to which no other nation's history can provide a parallel. For when we examine these other nations, what do we discover? In every single case the record is the same; it is a tale of rise and fall, of a climax being reached and then steady deterioration, physical and moral, but above all moral, until the nation has corrupted itself off the earth. Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Phœnicia, Greece, Rome—each was greatest, and did its greatest things, and thought its greatest thoughts, in its earlier rather than in its later history, the literature that they have left, their religious mind so far as we are able to interpret it, were nobler and more worthy in their earlier days than among the erotic luxury and degrading practices into which they sank.

Not so was it with the nation that produced the Bible. In itself it is hard to say that it deserved a better fate than

its neighbours; by nature it was a fickle people, easily perverted by prosperity; in matter of fact its history is one of almost endless infidelity; nevertheless the fact remains that while materially it fell, while in practice it was contemned, it grew in purity of understanding, in ideal of moral practice, in loftiness of spiritual ambition, so that it emerges from the ancient world like a sun out of the darkness, living and life-giving even to this day, while all that was around it has long since perished. So singular is this phenomenon, so unlike any other record, so contrary to the very dictate of human experience, that the mere fact, as it stands up before us, compels us to ask ourselves whether it can be explained by human criteria, or whether it must not be declared to be, what it declares itself to be, no more nor less than the product of the hand of God himself.

## II.—THE PENTATEUCH, OR THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS

### 1. The Books of the Old Testament

IT is not possible to verify the actual date of the books of the Old Testament. The best we can do in most cases is to give their approximate period, accepted by the more prudent scholars. This date is arrived at mainly from a study of the language of each book, the matter of which it treats, and the common teaching of Jewish and Christian tradition.

At the same time for an intelligent understanding of the Scripture it is well that this historical order should be borne in mind. For first, especially in the case of the prophets, their utterances have much to do with the circumstances of their times, and without reference to them can scarcely be understood; and secondly, by preserving their historical order, we are better able to follow the development of the Chosen People, and the growth of the revelation of the Word of God. Thirdly, the actual date of the various books will often help us in meeting objections on the one hand, and on the other in strengthening our proof of revelation, and of Christianity itself.

It will be seen at once from the following table that the writing of the Old Testament covered a period of about fifteen hundred years, not much short of the time from the age of the Apostles to our own. This is something unique in the history of sacred literature, for throughout the period there is a unity of teaching and of purpose which is to be found nowhere else but in Christianity. This alone is a strong confirmation—we may say it is historical proof—that the guiding and protecting hand of God was upon the various authors, and that the Bible,

the collection of these books, coming as they do from times and places so different, and from authors so varied, and yet remaining always the same in doctrine and spirit, is what it claims to be, the actual Word of God himself.

In the table here given a few historical events have been added which will help the student at a glance to grasp some at least of the main events connected with the books of the Bible. In this way the whole of Jewish history may be seen in outline in a single lesson; the details may then easily be added. Thus this bird's-eye view of the ancient Jewish literature becomes a first sketch of the history of the Jews themselves on which the rest may easily be built.

### *A Chronological Table of the Books of the Old Testament.*

The Creation of the World and of Man. The Fall of Man, the Deluge, the Separation of the Nations. For these events no date can be assigned.

3300 B.C. The First Egyptian Dynasty. The oldest nation of whose history we have any certain successive information is that of Egypt. There were Kings of Egypt before this date, but scholars are not agreed concerning the details of their history.

2000: The Call of Abraham, the Father of the Jewish people.

1750: The Settling of the Israelites in Egypt.

1490: The Departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, the Wandering in the Desert, and final Settlement in the Promised Land.

1490–1400: **The Composition of the Pentateuch—i.e., Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.**

1400–1200: **The Books of Josue, Judges, Ruth.**

1095: Saul, the first King of the Israelites.

1055: David, the founder of the Royal Line.

1015: Solomon, the builder of the Temple.

950: The Kingdom divided—The Kingdom of Israel in the North, including ten tribes; the Kingdom of Juda in the South, including two tribes, but with Jerusalem as its capital.

1000–900: **I-II Kings, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Canticle of Canticles.**

721: Destruction and Captivity of the Northern Kingdom by the Assyrians. Before and about this date—

800: **Abdias** prophesied against Edom.
**Jonas** prophesied against Ninive.
**Joel** prophesied in Juda.

800–750: **Amos** prophesied in Israel.

790–720: **Osee** prophesied in Israel.

750–720: **Micheas** prophesied in Israel and Juda.

759–699: **Isaias** prophesied in Israel and Juda.

588: Destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, and the Babylonian Captivity of the Southern Kingdom. Before and about this date—

640: **Nahum** and **Habacuc** prophesied to the exiles in Assyria.
**Sophonias** prophesied in Jerusalem.

628–585: **Jeremias** prophesied in Jerusalem and to the Chaldean Captives, so also **Baruch**. J. also wrote the **Lamentations.**

595–574: **Ezechiel** prophesied to the Captives.

606–534: **Daniel** prophesied to Captives.

600–500: **Tobias** was written during the Captivity.
**III-IV Kings** was written during the Captivity.

538: Edict for the Restoration of the Jews.

519: **Aggeus** prophesied to the Returning Jews.
**Zacharias** prophesied to the Returning Jews.

450: The final Restoration.

500–400: **I-II Esdras.**
**I-II Paralipomenon.**
**Esther, Judith.**

450: **Malachias** prophesied in Jerusalem.

300–200: **Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom.**

200–100: **I-II Machabees.**

The Book of **Job** cannot be dated.

1055–300: The **Psalms** range from David till perhaps the Machabees.

## 2.—The Book of Genesis

The first book of the Bible is Genesis. The word is Greek, and means " Birth "; and the book itself contains the story of the origin of the human race, of the origin and selection and early days of the Chosen People. That this second, rather than the first, is the author's object in writing the book is evident from many signs; most of all from the care with which he begins each new phase in his narrative with the words: " These are the generations of," etc., and then proceeds with long genealogies. He wishes it to be clear to his readers that he separates the Chosen People from others, and that their pedigree stands apart from all the rest.

The Book of Genesis falls naturally into five main divisions. First is the story of the Creation, of our first Parents and their Fall, of the children of Seth, born to replace Abel, of the corruption of man bringing about the Deluge, of the restoration of man in Noe, of the Tower of Babel and the consequent scattering of the human race. In all this part man in general is kept in view; at its conclusion we are given the genealogy of the children of Sem to Abram, thus showing that the latter belongs to the line of the chosen son of Noe.

With Abram a new phase begins. God had promised to Noe that he would not again overwhelm the human race; now he enters into personal and intimate relationship with a single man and his posterity. We are told much about Abram himself, whose name is later changed to Abraham, about his wanderings, his varying fortunes, and the birth of his only son, Isaac; and all the time the

promise, that in him and his posterity all the world will be blessed, is constantly kept before our minds. Then follows the history of Isaac, the story of the forfeiture of his birthright by his eldest son, Esau, and the succession of Jacob. Jacob's history and character are next developed as prominently as were those of Abraham; his twelve sons are given, and last of all the author concentrates on the fortunes of Joseph, the saviour of Egypt, and the saviour of his own people. But before the book closes Jacob calls his sons together for his last blessing; and here we are told explicitly that the promised blessing is to be a man, of the line, not of Reuben, the eldest of the twelve, nor of Joseph, the most dutiful, but of Juda.

Such in brief are the contents of the first book of the Bible, full of human interest, the pictures at times being sublime in their simplicity, so that one almost loses sight of the supernatural in the natural beauty that pervades it. And yet God is there all the time; his hand selects those whom he will, his guidance directs their lives, his voice is continually heard, warning, promising, rewarding. It is not without reason that the Book of Genesis has been called the Book of Visions, Covenants, and Promises.

Naturally enough, students of the Bible have asked themselves how much of its contents is to be taken as real history, how much is legend and no more; and recent discoveries in Babylonia and Assyria have intensified the interest of the question. But before attempting any answer, one or two facts are clear. Whether we allow that Genesis is really made up of pre-existing documents or not—and there is no reason why we should not—it is certain that the author deliberately put his material together with a view to making a complete book, and with a definite plan in mind. Compilation or not, the book as it stands is the work of one man; it is not an accidental accumulation of traditions and documents. To doubt this, for anyone who has studied the book as a whole, seems almost inconceivable.

On the other hand, it has been urged, especially with regard to the Story of the Creation, that not only does this contain no history at all, but that it has been derived from pagan myths, some of which have been recently discovered. At least three similar accounts have been brought to light by explorers, which bear evidence of being more ancient than the account in the Book of Genesis; and by comparing one with another it is maintained that the author of Genesis made use of these, purified them, and adapted them to his purpose. Moreover, that the Creation should have taken place in the way described in Genesis is proved by science to be impossible; the world could not have been created in successive days, and certainly not in the order given.

The objection is strong; when it was first urged it produced a great impression. But time has shown that, like so many others, it was of passing effect; and learning, of whatever camp, has gradually helped us to weigh the facts according to their right value. It is true that the ancient Babylonians and Assyrians had their own accounts of the origin of mankind; it seems natural to suppose that those early peoples would all have had some explanation to give of the origin of man. But there is no ground to suppose that the Scripture account is derived from them; they are polytheistic, this accepts only one God; they are deliberately extravagant, this is consistent and sane; and when scholars have attempted to show the process by which these other accounts could have been "purified" into that of Scripture, they have had to confess that it is hopeless. The two are as far apart as sea-water and wine; only a poet can see a semblance even of colour, let alone of taste and substance.

Nor does the "scientific" argument carry any more weight. To this point, of late years, scholars have devoted much attention; and the argument has at least done this much good, that we now know much better, on its account, what we are and what we are not bound to believe.

Science has said that the world could not have been created on successive days; but we need not believe that the word " day " in the first chapter of Genesis means the same as we understand by the term. Science has said that the order, etc., given by Genesis is impossible; but Catholic scholars have answered, and the Church has confirmed their reply, that " from the beginning Fathers and Doctors of the Church have interpreted the passage in divers ways," that we are not " bound to interpret in their strictly literal sense every single thing, words, namely, and phrases," which the passage contains.

On the contrary, again to quote the decision of Catholic scholars, approved by the Church, " it was not the intention of the sacred author, when writing the first chapter of Genesis, to teach us the innermost nature of visible things." It was not his intention " to present the complete order of creation in a scientific manner." Rather his intention was " to furnish his people with a popular account such as the common parlance of that age allowed, one, namely, adapted to the senses and to man's intelligence " at that time; and consequently it is both futile and unjust " when interpreting these chapters, to seek for scientific exactitude of expression."

Thus far the Church has spoken for our guidance. Here, as always, it will be seen that she is fully awake to the problem; that her scholars are not, as they are often said to be, behind the time; that she grants full liberty of discussion where liberty may be granted; but when she is slow to speak, it is only that the question may not be too hastily answered; that she would safeguard simply that which has been entrusted to her, the very truth; and hence, in discussing the first chapters of Genesis, she puts this restriction upon us, that we may not " call in doubt the literal and historical meaning when in these chapters there is question of the narration of facts which touch the foundations of Christian religion; as, for example, the creation of all things by God in the beginning

of time; the particular creation of man; . . . the unity of the human race; . . . the fall of our first parents from their primitive state of innocence; and the promise of a future Redeemer."

### 3.—Exodus and Leviticus

It is the common tradition that the first five books of the Bible—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—were fundamentally written by Moses; hence they are often classed together and called the Pentateuch or the Collection of Five Books. Some modern scholars now go further, and say that whoever may have primarily written these five, yet the final revision was made by the author of the sixth, the Book of Josue; and hence they prefer to put these together, as being a connected account of the foundation of the Israelites, and call them the Hexateuch, or Collection of Six Books. Be this as it may—there is perfect liberty to accept either view—the first six books are more or less connected in matter, and show many signs of similarity in construction and style, and may well be treated together; to the Jews of later times they were certainly the most important portion of the Bible.

The Book of Exodus divides naturally into three main parts. First is the account of the troubles of the Israelites in Egypt: how after the death of Joseph they sank lower and lower into subjection, how Moses was sent to deliver them, how by means of the plagues which he brought upon the Egyptians he forced Pharao to let them go free. Next is the story of their journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai; the preparations that were made on the eve of their departure, the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians by the Angel, the first part of their journey, and finally the establishment of the Feast of Passover as a perpetual memorial of the event. In the third part is given the all-important record of the sojourn at Mount

Sinai, and the giving of the law. Here the Ten Commandments were set up as the practical proof of the worship of the one true God; here the ritual service of the Jews was inaugurated, in the building of the Tabernacle and the consecration of Aaron; here the Children of Israel fell away, worshipping the calf of gold, and by Moses' intercession were taken back to favour.

Such are the contents of the Book of Exodus. Again the scholar is tempted to ask himself how much of this is sober history, and how much has been built up by later imagination. Carefully the evidence has been sifted during the last century; and it is commonly agreed that the author of this book, or the final compiler, must have had in his hands documents that went back to the actual days of the migration; that these documents came from different sources, and were therefore independent witnesses; that both Egyptian history, so far as we know it, and the later history of the Jews themselves, confirm the truth of this record. Lastly, the most recent discoveries in Egypt, in the buried tombs and monuments, tell us without a doubt of the oppression of the Israelites in Egypt, and their deliverance from bondage.

Of all the passages of Exodus, probably none concerns us more than that which contains the Decalogue, or the Ten Commandments. We are told that they were given to Moses on the mountain by God himself, and by God himself were engraven on two tables of stone. Does this mean that before this time there were no Ten Commandments? Obviously not; as theologians tell us, the Ten Commandments are nothing new; they are no more than the expression in words of principles of right and wrong which are engraved in the heart of every thinking human being; it did not require Moses to teach men that they must not commit murder, that they must not steal. All that the Scripture means—and this is true of many other passages—is that God took this human knowledge and gave it his divine sanction, put forth to men what they

already knew and practised, but henceforth on his own authority, which was more and endured longer than the authority of human conscience. After all, man knew he must not kill or steal, yet his conscience could become so hardened, or his life so vitiated, that he might forget these things; but the Word of God was more lasting than conscience, and it would bring back the truths to memory no matter how man might forget.

And perhaps precisely in this has lain the fact of the permanence of the Jewish, that is, later, of the Christian, civilisation. For while others have in time forgotten and ignored the natural law, and have in consequence, as St Paul says, been " delivered up to a reprobate sense," the Jewish people were never permitted to forget, however wicked they might be. In the same way Christianity has risen and sunk according as it has borne the Decalogue in mind, but the Word of God prevents it from being forgotten altogether, and so in the end Christianity has always survived.

As an example of the way that modern discoveries go to confirm the oldest historical statements of the Bible, we may take the following. The Book of Exodus tells us that the Israelites were oppressed in Egypt in a peculiar way. They were constrained to make bricks for building, but were refused straw with which to make them, and were ordered to go and find straw or stubble of their own for the purpose. Now we know from the actual bricks still discovered, which were made in early Egypt, that straw was commonly put among the clay to make it bind the better. But more than that. In recent years an explorer discovered a buried city in Egypt, which he declared answered in every way to the place about which the Israelites lived. When the bricks of which this city was built were examined they were found to be of three kinds: some contained straw, others contained reeds from the valley of the Nile, others, lastly, were of clay alone. In other words, the workers had first been

given straw for their bricks, had then been compelled to go in search of some substitute, and finally, since the same number of bricks was exacted of them, had given up their search and made the bricks of clay only. This little discovery is one of many which have increasingly confirmed the belief in the antiquity and truth of these most ancient documents.

The Book of Leviticus is the third book of the Bible. As its name implies, it is concerned with the work of the Levites—" the sacrifices by which men drew nigh to God." In this book, perhaps more than in any other, it is easy to notice how the contents have " grown." Though professing to be the ceremonial as given by God to Moses in the desert, nevertheless it is clear that much is of later date; as time has gone on the ritual has become more elaborate, just as has happened in the ritual of the Church, without the substance having been altered in the least. Such, at least, seems to be the common opinion of scholars today.

The book is divided into three main divisions. First are given the laws concerning sacrifices and purifications; and in these it seems not difficult to trace, first the description of the sacrifices themselves, then the manner in which they were to be formed, lastly the form of consecration for priests; all the time one feels that the book has developed as circumstances have arisen. This part concludes with the laws concerning purification and the Day of Atonement for sins committed. The second part is often called " The Law of Holiness," and is considered by some to be a book by itself which has been incorporated into the other. It gives many regulations concerning life, feasts and holidays, the sanctuary, etc.; and there are many who consider that the book is a collection of decisions concerning cases that have been brought up from time to time. The last part treats of vows and the release from them.

In many ways one may say that the Book of Leviticus

has least of instruction for Christianity among all the books of the Bible. It treats of the ceremonial that belonged to the Tabernacle and the Temple; it lays down laws concerning life as it was understood at least a thousand years before Christ; even its moral code, the list of its sins and their punishments, is of a kind altogether strange to the modern mind. Moreover, as we have already hinted, it seems agreed that the contents of the book are not all by one hand; what came from Moses has been added to as occasion has required.

Nevertheless, it has a great significance. Perhaps no book in the Bible so emphasises the sanctity of man himself on the one hand, and on the other the sanctity of God, and the reverence with which he must be treated. "Be ye holy, because I the Lord your God am holy," rings through the book in many places; and this may be taken as a summary of the whole. The people were a Chosen People; they belonged to God in an especial manner; therefore God would have them bound to himself by special rites; these rites were to emphasise to his people their place apart; this place apart was to be seen in them, not only by their exterior rites, but also by a higher moral standard, a holiness of life, a greater purity even in things external, than was noticed in others. This was the lesson of the book for the people of Israel; and for us it stands as a picture of the foreshadowing of that Christianity which was to hold up to man a perfect standard. Hence to us it is a kind of great prophetic work; and when, after his Resurrection, our Lord went back to Moses to prove his claim, and to show that the prophecies had been fulfilled, we may be sure that the Book of Leviticus was not the least important of the subjects that he explained.

### 4. Numbers and Deuteronomy

The Book of Numbers is the fourth book of the Old Testament; it derives its name from the fact that it begins with the numbering of the people of Israel before they began their eventful march from Mount Sinai to the Promised Land. This was in the second year of their wanderings; let us bear in mind that owing to their infidelity the Chosen People were kept in the desert forty years before the promise of God was fulfilled; the events of these forty years are for the most part related in this book.

It begins with an account of what happened at Mount Sinai, linking up the story very naturally with that of the Book of Exodus, the Book of Leviticus being obviously looked upon as a work by itself. But here at once something strikes us. At the opening of the book we are told the date—" the first day of the second month, the second year of their going out of Egypt." Then, in the ninth chapter, we are told what happened a month earlier—" the second year after they were come out of Egypt, in the first month." This fact, with other details which we need not here mention, seems to confirm the impression that this book, along with the rest of the collection of five, or the Pentateuch, was not written all at once but was put together later from more ancient documents.

The second division tells the story of the Wandering during the next thirty-eight years. It is a sad story, of constant complainings and revolts, but also of constant reconciliations, and of the mercy of God to his people. Israel complains against the monotonous food, the Manna; Mary and Aaron complain against their brother, Moses; the people again complain when the spies return from the Promised Land with an account of its abundant produce; there is a rebellion against Moses, who is accused of usurping the rights of the priesthood; there is another

rebellion, because the Levites, the priests of the now established Law, had been appointed in place of the first-born. For all these the Israelites are punished in some way; the greatest punishment of all is for the murmur after the return of the spies, when God assures them that none of those over twenty years of age shall ever enter the Land of Promise. Then it was that he turned them back into the desert, to wander for many years more.

The third section of the book tells us of the chief events before the Promised Land is entered. Mary and Aaron the sister and brother of Moses, die; the march is resumed, and again, in spite of a hopeful victory, murmuring is heard in the camp. For this there is sent among them a plague in the shape of fiery serpents; but once more, on the appeal of Moses, God saves many by means of the brazen serpent that is set up at his command, to look upon which brings relief to the sufferer. It is no wonder that the Jews, and Christians ever after, have looked upon this brazen serpent, set up for the salvation of many, as the great type of Jesus crucified, set up for the salvation of the world. In this section, too, is told the story of Balaam, the pagan prophet, sent to curse the people of Israel as they went triumphantly forward, but who was compelled by God to pronounce on them only blessing, and to utter one of the most remarkable of all the prophecies of the coming Redeemer. "I shall see him, but not now. I shall behold him, but not near. A star shall rise out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall spring up from Israel: . . . out of Jacob shall he come that shall rule, and shall destroy the remains of the city."

The significance of this Book of Numbers is well brought out by a modern writer. "Few books of Holy Writ," he says, "contain a more vivid picture of the Christian's pilgrimage, and of the difficulties attending thereon, than the Book of Numbers. To him, as to the Chosen People, rest in God's land is truly promised; to him, as to them, God's paternal and constant protec-

tion is faithfully extended; he, like them, proves repeatedly unfaithful, ungrateful and ungenerous, and yet he, like them, can reach the Land of Promise with its ideal prosperity and everlasting possession, only in so far as he overcomes his passions, the allurements of worldly pleasures, and "walks worthy of the vocation in which he is called." In a word, "all that befell Israel on their march toward Chanaan can be easily taken as a figure applicable to the Christian soul, as also to the Christian Church."

In view of this it is not to be wondered at that the Book of Numbers should have been used so much by preachers in every age of the Church, or that the events which it narrates should be among the most familiar to Christians from all the contents of the Bible.

The Book of Deuteronomy follows. Its name would signify that it is a second account or rendering of the Law of Moses, but in matter of fact it is very much more. The border of the Promised Land has at last been reached; many enemies have been conquered, and the people are preparing to march forward to the conquest that had been assured them. At this point Moses calls them together, and in a wonderful discourse reminds them of all they had witnessed, and all that God had done for them, since they left Mount Sinai.

This occupies the first section. Then, in the same place, Moses makes a further address to the people. In this he begins with an account of their duties towards God, as contained in the Law which they had received; next he seems to look into the future, reminding his hearers of further obligations and duties which, in a settled land, they might be liable to forget or ignore; he proceeds to tell them of the ceremonies to be performed when the Promised Land has at last been conquered; he concludes with details about the Covenant, words at once of warning and encouragement.

The last four chapters of Deuteronomy form the third

section, and are particularly beautiful. They form a kind of appendix, containing the last exhortation of Moses to his beloved people, his canticle, and his blessing; and this concludes with the story of his death.

The Book of Deuteronomy is full of dignity and pathos. It purports to be the last words of Moses; it is spoken of as a repetition of the Law already given; but in reality it is very much more. Not only is much added which is not found in the preceding books, but clearly and before all it is a book of religious instruction. Here more than anywhere else are the people taught the nature of their God; his greatness and unity in himself, his great love and care for them, his right to their love in return; nay more, so great is his love for them, he commands that they shall love him: "Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength."

Here, again, more than elsewhere are the relations of religious and moral duty combined. The people are reminded to obey the commands of God, not because they are commands only, but because such obedience is part of their reverence and love and service; they are a Chosen People, and as such it belongs to them to have their own standards, to stand aloof from the abominations of those about them. "Overthrow their altars, and break down their statues: burn their groves with fire, and break their idols in pieces. You shall not do so to the Lord your God."

Here, lastly, the people are taught how unique is their form of worship. They shall have one common centre, that which God himself shall choose; one only priesthood, that of the Tribe of Levi; their ceremonies, their sacrifices, their feasts, their purifications, shall all be the same and their own.

It need not then be wondered at that the Book of Deuteronomy, with its high oratorical tone, its beauty of

style, its religious fervour, had a deep influence on all the literature of the Bible that came after. It provided the terminology of the law-courts; it suggested the language of religious worship; even its literary influence is marked in the use of its phrases and expressions to be found in almost all subsequent writers. Not seldom does a later author seem to pause in his own composition to adopt or imitate some passage of Deuteronomy which seems more to suit his purpose, just as in modern times a writer will instinctively make use of a phrase or a sentence of the Bible, or Shakespeare, or another great author to express some idea of his own.

Lastly the Book of Deuteronomy has the ring of antiquity throughout. Its geography is marked; its ignorance of subsequent events argues much for its genuineness as the work of Moses; even the death of the prophet, given at the end of the book, is full of evidence that it has been written, not at a later date, but by a contemporary; so that the tradition is by no means yet destroyed, that the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, were written by Moses.

St. Albert's College Library

## III.—THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

### 1. Josue, Judges, Ruth

THE first five books of the Bible, of which we have now treated, stand apart from all the rest. They tell us of the first foundations of the human race, and then in particular of the Chosen People, and belong in a true sense to what may be called the time before history proper begins. But with the coming of the Hebrews into the Promised Land begins the history of that people as one of the nations of the world; in consequence their literature, of which the Bible is by far the most important part, henceforth takes its place as belonging to the world's literature.

In our further studies, therefore, we propose to consider the books of the Bible not only as works in themselves but also in their connection with history. For in a true sense it may be said that unless we read them in this connection, not only do we miss their meaning, but many of them become quite unintelligible; the Bible is in fact the record of the nation, given to us in various forms, its rises and its falls, its infidelities and its revivals, the story of its dealings with God and of God's dealings with it; the whole making, as we have said, such a distinct unity that this alone is almost a proof of the hand of God in its composition.

The coming of the Hebrews from Egypt across the Sinai Desert to the Promised Land, then called the Land of Canaan, and now Palestine, is generally supposed to have taken place about the year 1450 B.C. The Canaanites, who lived in the country, knew of their coming and made preparations to resist them; but their resistance broke

down before the strength of the invasion, and soon the Holy Land, from north to south, and into the Arabian Desert on the east of the Jordan, was in the hands of the Hebrews. Immediately they set about organising the country according to the directions given to them by Moses; the tribes were established in their separate divisions, a system of government by Judges was set up; a modern student might almost call it the United States of Palestine.

But the centre and bond of union was not, as in modern confederations, political; there was no strictly central authority that kept the people together. This was secured (1) by the tremendous consciousness which has kept the Jews one from that day to this, the sense of their being a nation apart from all others, (2) by their oneness of faith and religious practice, separating them from all the nations around them, (3) by the coming from time to time of men of God, sometimes warriors, sometimes prophets, who awakened in the Hebrews the memory of their great vocation, if ever it slumbered. Other causes, geographical, political, etc., may have helped to this union; but these were only additional means, provided by God himself; they could never of themselves either have developed that national consciousness which is so unique, or have saved it from destruction under the disasters which from time to time overwhelmed it.

This first period of history is represented by three books, Josue, Judges, and Ruth, and may be considered to extend from 1450 B.C. to 1100 B.C.

## *Josue.*

Of these the first is the Book of Josue. Aaron and Moses had died without entering the Land of Promise as God had told them that they would; Moses, before his death, had solemnly chosen Josue to lead the people to victory, and God had ratified the choice; in this book we

are told, first, of the fulfilment of the divine promise by the success given to the arms of Josue, and then of the division and settlement of the conquered country. The Jordan is crossed at Jericho and the kings of the south are overcome; when the southern conquest has been consolidated, then the confederacy of the North is reduced. The land is assigned, and to the Jews ever after the Book of Josue served as a permanent record of the tribal divisions. But throughout the book one seems to hear the constant refrain: "God is faithful." More than a history of the settlement of the Holy Land, it is, and is evidently intended to be, a record of the fulfilment by God of his promises to his people. The book concludes with the dying reminder and exhortation of Josue to the Jews, which at once links it up with the spirit of Moses.

When was the book written, and by whom? The last we do not know; if, as a tradition says, by Josue himself, then not the whole, for the last chapter records his death and burial. But the evidence is strong that the tradition is true which attributes it to his time; it has many allusions to contemporary conditions which afterwards materially changed, sometimes it alludes to things as present which soon passed away; if the book is a later work, then beyond a doubt it is made up of contemporary documents.

### *Judges.*

The Book of Judges takes up the record after the death of Josue. But if the Book of Josue proves the fidelity of God in rewarding those who follow him, this book no less proves his fidelity to those who are unfaithful. Fidelity in this, that retribution follows disobedience, but yet "at length he remembers mercy"; for the book is little more than a wearisome tale of the faithlessness of the Jewish people to their God, of their consequent oppression by one or other of their neighbours, of their repentance

under punishment, and of the sending of a deliverer. Over and over again the story is repeated; in a series of short biographies, as it were, of Othoniel, of Debora, of Gedeon, of Jephte, of Samson, and of five others, the author gives us the history of the Jews for some four hundred years.

From the whole account we see once more how clearly the hand of God preserved his people. That it is a true story there can be no doubt; nevertheless one is compelled to say as one reads that there is no parallel to it among other nations. By all the laws of history this people should have perished; sapped of its own strength, divided against itself, it should have followed the common fate and been sucked into the greater and stronger nations that overwhelmed it. Above all should this have been the doom of its religion. Of its own accord it had in great measure thrown it away; in the days of peace, when its dependence on God had been no longer felt, it had brought in the gods of other nations, along with their unholy rites and practices. This had been done, not once, but many times; and history tells us how hard it is for any nation to recover a faith which it has once lost or suffered to be corrupted. Yet every time both nation and religion revived. In this alone, as the Jews later understood it, a prophecy of the Saviour to come was typified, and a miraculous proof was given that God was still with them.

The author of the Book of Judges is again unknown, but the Jewish tradition attributed it to the prophet Samuel. Obviously, being a record of at least four hundred years, it is a compilation of ancient documents; on the other hand, there are many indications that it was written in very ancient times, before the days of the kings, Saul and David, or at least before the days when Saul brought misery into the land.

### *Ruth.*

The Book of Ruth, which belongs to the same collection as the two preceding, is one of special interest. In the first place it gives us an account of one of the ancestors of our Lord, the first mentioned and indeed the only one between the sons of Jacob and David. In the second place it reminds us that by no means all our Lord's ancestors were Jews; for Ruth herself was a Moabitess, even as later the wife of David was a Hethite. And thirdly, better than either of the former books, it gives us an insight into the manners and customs of that early time.

In form a modern critic might classify the Book of Ruth as an historical novel. It tells how a man of Bethlehem had married a Moabitess named Ruth. In a time of famine the family had gone into Moab; there the man had died, and his mother and widow returned to Bethlehem, Ruth being determined to share the fortunes of her husband's mother, rather than stay in Moab in comparative plenty. For her constancy she was rewarded; on her return she was married to one of the tribe of Juda, and from this union she became an ancestress of David.

Once more tradition has ascribed this little book to Samuel, and there is much to confirm the tradition. At all events one feels convinced that the author of the Book of Judges was also the author of the Book of Ruth, and both alike belong, in subject and in spirit, to the period of Jewish history when "there was no king in Israel." In individual interest, in pathos, in style, it is scarcely too much to say that it is one of the most beautiful of all the books of the Bible.

## 2. Kings I–IV

It has been said in a former chapter that the four books under this title in our Catholic Bible were not by the same author, nor indeed of the same date. In a non-Catholic version of the Bible they are differently named; the first two are called the Books of Samuel, the second two only are called the Books of Kings. The difference has arisen, here as in many other places, from the fact that the Catholic version has relied more upon the Septuagint, or ancient Greek text, which called the four books "The Kingdoms"; while the non-Catholic versions are taken more from the Hebrew, which makes the division just given.

Nominally these four books trace the history of the kingship among the Jewish people from its beginning to its end. Before the period at which they open, the settlers in the Promised Land had, from the days of their leader Josue, been governed by what were known as Judges, the nature of whose rule was somewhat vague. But here we are introduced to a kind of revolutionary age, when the people demanded a king like the surrounding nations; and Samuel, the last of the Judges, by the choice of God anoints Saul the first king. He is followed by David, David by his son Solomon, Solomon by Roboam; in the last reign there comes another revolution, and the original kingdom is divided into two: Juda in the South, and Israel in the North. The reigns of successive kings in the two kingdoms are then recorded, till each in turn perishes and is taken into captivity by the invading powers from the further North.

It is not difficult for any student to discover that these books were written originally by two different authors, even though it is quite possible that they were subsequently revised, and welded into one whole, by a single author at a later date. The writer of the first two

books gives no references for his facts; his period is much more simply divided, confining itself to the reigns of Saul and David only; he contents himself with the record, practically never does he offer any comment of his own. But with the author of the second two books it is quite different. He constantly tells us the sources from which he derives his information; from his remarks it would seem certain that he himself belongs to the southern kingdom, that of Juda; he takes every care even to give his dates, so far as that was possible in the time in which he lived.

Two things deserve at once to be noted with regard to these four books. The first is, that they are the first and only attempt at real history known in those ancient times. Babylon and Assyria, Egypt and the other nations, all were greater than the Hebrews; nevertheless all they give us by way of historical records are isolated inscriptions and monuments, isolated manuscripts and deeds, but nothing that we can call arranged history in the sense in which now we understand the term. Very many of these records are in our hands, found in tombs and other places, to which scholars still find it impossible to give a date; many have been dated by the record in these books of the Bible; when all are put together, if ever that time comes, it will be found that the four Books of Kings were the chief foundation of their chronology.

The second thing to be noticed is even more important for us. The casual reader may well ask himself why such books as these should be introduced into the Bible; what lesson have they to teach us, as coming from the hand of God? At first sight there would seem to be little or nothing. The tale is very monotonous; each king's reign is given as briefly as possible; one reads much like another, in fact the author contents himself at times with the repetition of a few stock phrases. But as one reads along one discovers certain impressions

growing on the mind. One recognises that God has made promises and is seen to keep them; that these promises are conditional on the fidelity of his people, and his people are not always faithful. In this light the four books become almost a commentary on the Book of Deuteronomy. There we are told how God promised that if his Chosen People would be faithful to him he would bless them, even in this world; if they failed him, curses would follow. Here we are shown how the record of over five hundred years proved his words to have been fulfilled.

Taken with this underlying lesson in our mind, the four Books of Kings might well be summarised as follows. One might so put it in the mouth of God: "I have given you a method of rule; you have clamoured against it and have demanded a rule according to your own heart; I have given it to you, and you have found it a curse instead of a blessing. Still I have had mercy upon you: I have given you a king, in David, 'after my own heart'; since he came from me you have found him good. To David and his line I have promised great things, even as I promised great things to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and their posterity. But on the same conditions; if their posterity were true to me, these promises should take effect even in a material sense; if they were not true, their fulfilment should be in a spiritual sense only.

"And neither you nor they have been true; you have gone steadily downwards and against me; your kings have neglected my counsel, your people have rejected my law; and I have suffered you to reap the fruit of your own evil deeds. You have become divided in consequence against yourselves; one by one you have fallen victims to your enemies, and have been wiped off the face of the earth. And yet not all; at the end I have remembered mercy. I have sent my prophets, some to guide you, some to warn you of the danger that was threatening;

last of all, when nothing would prevail to save you, these prophets have told you that at least the spiritual sense of my promises should be fulfilled, in the restored line of David, in a restored chosen people."

Such might be taken as the significance, or drift, of the four books. But there may be something more. From the beginning the Hebrews had known that their history was typical as well as real; their rites and ceremonies related to the future, events foreshadowed what was to come, even certain characters were considered to foretell the character of the Messiah in whose coming they believed. Obviously, then, the spirit of the kingship would have in their minds some connection with the future King of kings. The King was "Christ," the anointed; he stood as the Mediator of his people before God; in the most striking among them, especially in David and Solomon, they saw foreshadowings of the King himself. In various ways, therefore, these four books served as an object-lesson to the Jews of later times; to us, apart from their inspired value, they are a revelation of the trained mind of the people among whom they were written.

One objection has been raised in modern times against the historical value of these books. It is said that in some places they contradict themselves; that in other places they state as facts things which cannot be true; that their chronology in particular is all wrong. Now in considerations of this kind let us bear in mind, first, that whether they are entirely accurate or not, they are indefinitely ahead of any other books of their kind belonging to that age; second, that their writers were not trained historians such as we have today, nor had they the means that we possess of research and study; third, that as for chronology, it is almost hopeless to expect it in the ages before the Christian era, when years were not numbered, as they are today, when men were accustomed to speak of time in general terms, and when in matter of fact a few

years more or less was considered to mean nothing in an historical survey. Bearing these things in mind, it is enough to say that whether there are mistakes or not in details does not affect the inspiration of the whole, any more than it affects the inspiration of the Book of Genesis to believe that the " days " of the Creation were not of necessity days as we understand the term. The writer did his best, his account is the truth as it was known at the time that he wrote; though a passage here and there may be historically inaccurate—we do not assert that it was, for almost every case quoted may be questioned —still it was true as a faithful record, true, too, as representing that which God wished to express through the writer's pen.

## 3. Paralipomenon I–II; Esdras I–II

### *Paralipomenon* I-II

In our last section we spoke of the four Books of Kings. These form the backbone of the history of the ancient Jewish people, and indeed, as we showed, of all the people surrounding them in those times. They were written, probably, at different periods, and by at least two different authors; they were written with the special object of showing how God was faithful to his promises though the Jews were unfaithful to their undertaking; they leave out much which a modern historian would consider essential, add much which is intended only to bring out that which the authors wished to teach.

Immediately after these four Books of Kings there follow two others which at first sight seem only to go over the same ground again, summarising much that has been said, putting in other details which have been omitted. In consequence the ancient Greek translators called these two books *Paralipomena—i.e.*, " things left

out "—looking on them as a kind of appendix to the former by a later author. But the original Hebrew version is called *Chronicles*, a name kept in the non-Catholic translation, and perhaps with more reason. For though it is true they contain incidents, and still more elaborated accounts of events passed over in the Books of Kings, still it is evident to the student that they are independent works, giving the history of the kingdoms of Israel and Juda from quite another point of view.

This point of view is that of the Levites or priests; the two books are their record of the events of their times, and almost all, if not quite all, the additions are elaborations of things which concern the Levites and their special functions. Thus we hear more in these books than before of the arrangements concerning the removal of the Ark of the Covenant; the procession of the Levites is described, and even the psalms they sang are given; through many chapters we are told the decrees made by King David concerning the Tabernacle and the ceremonies to be performed about it. A full account is written of the purification of the temple by Ezechias, and of the reforms of Josias.

Of the actual date when these two books were written it is difficult to give an opinion. Many modern writers put them as late as the third century B.C. When we look at their arguments we find that they chiefly rest on certain genealogies of families which are brought down to that late date. But here as elsewhere it should be remembered that it is dangerous to argue to the date of a whole book from the apparent date of any single passage. These may easily have been added as time went on; just as in modern histories additions and alterations are made in new editions, or as in the Church's missal and breviary changes are introduced from time to time, without interfering with the antiquity of the whole. However, this is a matter of comparatively little importance.

One thing will strike any reader of the two Books of Paralipomenon, and that is the care with which the author quotes his authorities. We are continually being referred to " The Book of the Kings of Juda and Israel," which is clearly the record of events kept at the king's court; or again to the " acts " of various prophets, which would seem to be accounts of their times, and of the parts they played in them, written by the successive prophets themselves. In spite of this, the student will discover that there are statements in these books which are difficult to reconcile with parallel statements in the Books of Kings; sometimes they seem to contradict one another. But a partial answer to this problem is contained in the remark of the great scholar of the Scripture, St Jerome, who, while in one place he says that to ignore the Books of Paralipomenon is to make oneself an ignoramus as to the Scriptures—St Jerome is famous for his strong statements—yet in another he complains that these books have been much corrupted and tampered with, so that we are not always sure what the original text contained.

## *Esdras* I–II

Following the Books of Paralipomenon come two other historical books which many consider to have been at first not distinct, but chapters added to those which we have just described. These are called in the Catholic Bible the two Books of Esdras, in the non-Catholic version Esdras and Nehemias, because each is mainly concerned with the part played by each of these two leaders. For the student of Jewish history they are most important, as they tell us practically all we know of the restoration of the Jews to their native land.

The Books of Kings and Paralipomena left the Chosen People exiles and captives " by the waters of Babylon." There they remained for nearly a hundred years, when Cyrus the Persian King, who was now the master of the

country, looked with favour on them and issued a decree allowing them to return. At once a small remnant of the ancient people gathered together and set out. They came to Jerusalem; they set about rebuilding the Temple; but the Samaritans, their neighbours, put every opposition in their way, even compelling them to defend themselves by force of arms. For several years this trouble continued; at length came Esdras, with full powers given to him by the then King, Artaxerxes, and this first stage in the restoration was brought to a happy end.

So ends the first book. The second takes up the story a few years later, and records the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. Nehemias, the new leader, obtains permission for this from the Persian King. In spite of every opposition, even from some of the Jews themselves, the walls are built; then, in very beautiful and pathetic language we are told how the Law was publicly restored and read, how the people began their new era with penance, how the mercies of God in the past were acknowledged and proclaimed in full assembly, how the Covenant was renewed, the newly built city was blessed and dedicated, many abuses which had crept in during the period of Captivity were abolished, catalogues were made of the priests and of the people, and Israel again set out upon her journey, the last stage, to meet "him who was to come" some four hundred years later.

We have said that these two books, being practically our only source of information concerning the restoration of the Jews to their own country, are of great historical importance; this is all the more true considering they give the decrees and documents authorising and confirming the return. In fact, one may say that the history is made subservient to the documents; these occupy almost the first place, we are given them in the original language, the history is chiefly provided as their setting, what led up to them and what was their result. In addition to the decrees the compiler has been careful to

give the exact accounts as left by contemporaries; thus we find some parts suddenly dropping into the use of the first person, thereby showing that they were written by a contemporary, even by Esdras and Nehemias themselves.

Throughout the four books here described it is clear that, though they are historical, yet history as we understand it is to the authors quite in the second place. In the first place is the fact of the mercy of God, combined with his justice. Israel has done evil, in spite of its undertakings, and it has been punished, as God warned it through Moses would happen. Israel in exile has recognised its sin and has repented; and the Holy City is at once restored. We hear nothing of the many Jews who did not come back. These were scattered throughout the world, and were henceforth known as "The Dispersion"; but Jerusalem rose again out of its ruins, and the Temple again stood on the Holy Hill, they came regularly in pilgrimage to it, and round that Temple they remained one people, wherever they had gone to live, or whatever language they spoke. When Jesus came, and the Jews of Jerusalem rejected him, it was more among these dispersed Jews that his disciples found welcome.

## 4. Tobias, Judith, Esther

### *Tobias.*

We come now to three books, each very beautiful in itself, but providing many difficult problems for the Bible student. They are three stories, put at the end of the historical books which have already been examined; and at once we ask ourselves, Are these, too, historical facts, or are they only stories, founded on actual events? Let us confess at once we do not know; all we do know is they are accepted as part of the inspired Scripture by

the Church; and God can as well speak to his people through a story as through a fact, even as Jesus our Lord spoke through his own invented parables.

Therefore we may set this question aside, inasmuch as it does not matter in the very least for the object which we have in view. The Book of Tobias, the first of these, tells a story concerning a Jewish family during the days of the Captivity in Babylon. The family is in trouble; the Angel Raphael is sent from heaven to relieve them; the whole concludes in joy, proclaiming the goodness and fidelity of God.

But now comes a second problem. Scholars are agreed that the text of this book is much corrupted. It must be borne in mind that our English Bible is taken from the Latin of St Jerome. St Jerome took his Latin from such originals as he had at his disposal. In this particular case, as he himself tells us, the version from which he translated was written in Chaldæan, and since he himself was not proficient in Chaldæan he employed an interpreter to help him. Since his time other versions have been found, which differ considerably in some places from his text. It is the business of our Scripture scholars to determine which is the original and correct reading; and Scripture scholars work slowly and with caution. Till they guide us, we can be content to take the version of St Jerome.

Though the story of Tobias is referred to the period of the Jewish Captivity—that is, to the seventh century B.C.—still there is much to show that the book must have been written a long time later. The historical details are not such as a contemporary would have written; names are confused, geography seems to be inaccurate, the moral tone is rather that of later times than that of the Captivity, allusions are made to later practices, later authors, which seem to render it impossible to reconcile the book with the seventh century B.C. But this, again, need not give trouble. Like so many books of Scripture,

this later version is clearly founded on an old tradition, and though the setting may be of much later date the Word of God which it contains is none the less revealed.

## *Judith.*

The Book of Judith is the second of these historical stories, very beautiful in itself, and full of noble poetry, but, like Tobias, teeming with difficulties for the Bible student. The Medes had come down upon the city in which the widow, Judith, lived. In their straits the chiefs of the people were contemplating surrender. Judith comes out from her seclusion and protests; undertakes herself to save her people; goes down into the camp of the enemy, and succeeds in destroying their leader, Holofernes. The book concludes with the praises of Judith, and the raising of her to the rank of a national heroine.

Here, as in Tobias, we are confronted with two problems, and once more they can only be referred to Scripture scholars; the ordinary student has not the means at his disposal with which to help him to decide for himself. In the first place, St Jerome tells us that his translation of the book has not been very accurately made; he has given us a paraphrase rather than a translation. In the second place, the story is most difficult to fit into the history of the Jews as we know it. But this last need not trouble us much. There are many details in the history of which we know nothing, many wars and invasions at which we can only guess, or of which we get only hints from chance passages, and it would seem that the story of Judith belongs to one of these. That it belongs to a later and not an earlier period would appear from the fact that the name of the enemy leader, Holofernes, is a Greek name, as also from certain allusions which imply that this deliverance took place after the Jews had returned from the Captivity.

More important for us is the lesson of the book, and of this there can be no doubt. It is the consistent lesson of the fidelity of God to men, which runs through the whole of the Old Testament; but in particular of the power of prayer, and of devotion to the House of the Lord. This is seen in the attention to detail, to mortification, to strict observance of the law, and to those other things which, later, the Pharisees carried to excess. On the other hand, it is very clear from the prayer of Judith, and from other passages, that God is the Master, and that we depend upon his providential care. Of the action of Judith in her betrayal of Holofernes we can only say that the times and ideas were different from ours, and that it is not her act but the liberation of her people under the providence of God that the book extols.

### *Esther.*

The third of these stories, the Book of Esther, takes us back to the days of the Captivity in Babylon. Esther, with her uncle Mardochai, was in the land of exile; there she attracted the attention of the then king, Ahasuerus, or Xerxes; she was chosen for his queen, and in that capacity was enabled to avert the threatened extermination of her people, by their arch-enemy Aman. Instead, she procured Aman's conviction and death, as an enemy of the country. To commemorate this feast the festival of " Purim " was added to the Jewish calendar, and it is probably as a kind of explanation of this that the story was written.

Any ordinary reader of the Book of Esther may find it a little confusing. The story as it is contained in the first ten chapters seems to run smoothly enough; but the remaining six chapters seem to be mere appendices, which ought rather to be placed in other parts of the text. This impression is quite correct. In matter of fact St Jerome made his translation from the Hebrew

text. But he found that the Greek contained several passages which the Hebrew did not contain; and these he collected at the end, instead of inserting them in their right places, or as he found them in the Greek. He preferred to confuse the order of the story rather than fail to distinguish the difference between the Hebrew and Greek versions.

## IV. THE POETICAL BOOKS

### 1. The Book of Job

PROBABLY no book of the Old Testament has been more studied by scholars than the Book of Job. It stands alone, both in its form and in its teaching. In form it is a drama, and as it is the only specimen of the dramatic style of its time, on that account alone it has claimed the attention of students of ancient literature.

We are introduced at the beginning to the main character, Job, a just man and blessed with the good things of this world. Then Satan obtains leave from God to try him, first by depriving him of all his worldly possessions, next by reducing Job himself to misery.

The first scene of the drama then opens, Job being seated an outcast on a dunghill, while three friends come to condole with him in their own way. One after another they console him by rebuking him; evidently, they say, he must have sinned or God would not so have punished him; but to each Job gives the same answer, that he is innocent, that he is conscious of nothing between himself and his Creator, and though he does not understand, yet he trusts God and his Justice.

In the second scene the friends repeat their attack, but in yet stronger terms. Since Job will not confess his guilt they take this as proof of his wickedness. But Job continues to defend himself; the more they accuse him, the more he proclaims his trust that God will be his vindicator; and he concludes with the counter-challenge that if such suffering is a proof of guilt, how comes it that the wicked in this world prosper more than the just ?

The third scene goes yet further. In this the friends try to specify the sins of which Job is guilty. Still Job will not yield. He demands to be tried before the tribunal of God. One at least of his accusers he appears to convince, and then, in a long dignified passage, he defends the justice of God in spite of then seeming injustice, declares that in the end good and bad alike will meet with their deserts, then concludes with a speech in his own defence, showing the innocence of his former life.

At this point another speaker joins in. He has listened to all that has been said, and now proceeds to criticise both sides. Job is wrong in misunderstanding God; suffering is sent by him to purify and perfect man, not only to punish. The friends are wrong in not accepting Job's answer; they had only condemned, and yet had no definite charge to make.

While he is yet speaking a storm gathers, and immediately the voice of God himself is heard in the midst of the storm and the whirlwind. Job has prayed that God would hear him; now God shows that his prayer has not been in vain. He speaks with tremendous majesty; brings home to Job and his friends the insignificance of man in comparison with his Creator, and therefore the hopelessness of his attempting to fathom his designs; goes through all creation to illustrate his point, from the inanimate to the animate; rebukes Job for not recognising this, and for not having bowed down from the beginning. Job accepts the rebuke, humbles himself in dust and ashes, and is forgiven.

The drama then closes happily. Job has gone through his ordeal; not faultlessly, because he was human and did not wholly understand; but faithfully, and with enduring patience; and he is rewarded by God, not only with restoration to all his former honours, but to still greater prosperity.

Even from this short summary it will be seen at once

how complete and dignified is the whole poem; the language, even in any accurate translation, adds to this effect. It is just a literary masterpiece, deserving to be ranked among the great classics of all time. The question next arises whether, or how far, it is historically true, or whether it is to be considered as an invented poem and no more. In answer most scholars are agreed that it is a poem, enlarged and developed by the poet's imagination, but founded on historical fact; that Job did exist, that the story of his trial was a true tradition, but that the author took this tradition, as poets have done in so many other instances, and on it based the lesson that he had to teach.

In confirmation of this view is the striking evidence of the book itself. When it was written, and by whom, we do not know; but the Hebrew in which it is composed is very ancient, while, more convincing still, the allusions and the omissions seem to leave no doubt that Job belonged to the age of Moses or before it, that he himself was not a Jew but an Arabian, that though he was a worshipper of one only God, yet he did not know the religion of the Chosen People. The same is to be said of the other characters of the poem; all alike betray ignorance of what any Jew would naturally utter; whoever, therefore, was the author, the substance of the book has been taken from some tradition which did not belong to the Jews alone.

From what has been said it will be easily seen what the author of the Book of Job intends to teach. Behind all that is said by either side is the fact of the fundamental wisdom and providence of God; even if they are wrong in their interpretation of this, the fact of it all whole-heartedly assume. Accepting this, the problem before the speakers is, how to reconcile with this the evil in the world; how it is that the good seem to suffer while the wicked pass through life unscathed. Various suggestions are examined: in the end we are shown, first, that

the fulfilment of the will of God is a greater thing than even man's own prosperity; secondly, that suffering is not always the evil that it seems, but is a healing and a medicine; thirdly, that without suffering the greatest of men's virtues could never be seen, in no other way could the patience and fidelity of Job himself have been made manifest.

It is perhaps worth while to say a word about the construction of the poem and the style which it displays. The introduction and the conclusion are in prose, the various scenes are in poetical form. These are perfectly balanced one against another, and are again for the most part subdivided in perfect proportion. All this suggests a high development of the poetic art at the time when the poem was written, making us wonder about the people of the age, and their refined civilisation, in spite of externals which we in our generation are inclined to call barbaric.

Last of all, it is impossible to study the Book of Job and its teaching without being compelled to consider the Passion of our Lord, the antitype of Job. Both alike suffer unjustly; both are praised by God himself for their justice, even while he permits them to fall into the hands of "the power of darkness"; in both cases man looks for an answer to the question why it was all permitted. In the Book of Job we have the answer before the light of the Passion has been thrown on human life and has altered the whole of man's conception. In Job suffering, from beginning to end, is accepted as an evil; the writer's only aim is to explain its presence, to give it some justification. This is in keeping with the tone of all the Old Testament. But with the coming of our Lord all is altered. He could never do evil; he could never have chosen what was evil; yet he deliberately chose a life of suffering himself, blessed suffering and those who suffer, invited his friends to follow him suffering as being the highest ideal of life. Thus does our Lord improve and

develop what we find in Job. After him suffering is not only, as the Book of Job taught, a punishment; it is not only a cure of human frailty; it is not only a test of man, a means of showing the virtue that is in him; it is, besides, the surest means of resembling and drawing near to our Lord. Suffering he has accepted as his own lot; he has blessed it as above all things excellent; hence when he had gone, unlike Job, who could only endure with patience, his disciples were able to go forth and " rejoice that they were accounted worthy to suffer " for his name. In such ways as this does the New Testament improve upon the Old; in such ways does our Lord show that he " came not to destroy but to perfect."

## 2. The Book of the Psalms

Of all the books of the Old Testament with which one would wish everyone to be familiar, undoubtedly the Book of the Psalms stands first. In the Early Church all prayer was built upon it, in our own liturgy it is threaded in and out; in reciting his office every day the priest, among other prayers, reads through the Psalms every week, though the rest of the Bible he traverses only once a year. It is, then, most desirable that we should have some notion of this wonderful book of ancient poetry and devotion, its origin, its content, and most of all its spirit.

In Hebrew the book is called " The Praises "; from some indications it seems also to have been called " Prayers "; in any case, it must be called the prayer book or hymn book of the Chosen People. And as all prayers that come from the heart express better than anything else the innermost life of that heart, so does the Book of the Psalms express, more vividly and warmly than any other book, the working of the Old Law upon the Jew's inner life, the fruit of that working in the aspira

tions it calls forth, the ideals and the goals towards which he looks and aims. As a learned scholar has well put it: "In the Law God spoke to his people, in the Psalter the Chosen People speaks to its God."

Altogether there are 150 Psalms in the Psalter; but it is worth a beginner's while to notice that not all the versions agree in their divisions. In the Hebrew text certain poems were put together and considered as one; certain others were broken into two. In the Greek and Latin versions different divisions were considered more suitable; so that, though both agreed in keeping the same total of 150, yet the numbering of the Psalms themselves does not always correspond. This is important to be borne in mind by readers of the two chief English translations; for while the Douay or Catholic translation has adopted the divisions of the Greek and Latin texts, the Anglican version has adopted those of the Hebrew.

Before considering anything else it is important that we should bear in mind what is known as the Messianic character of the Psalms. Not only are some of them distinctly prophetic, and that in perhaps greater detail than any other of the prophecies; but there is a true sense in which it may be said that the whole Book of the Psalms is one great prophecy, and, to be rightly understood, as a faithful Jew would have understood it, it should be read with the mind directed towards the Christ that was to come. For the Jews were essentially built upon prophecy; they were the people from whom the Redeemer was to be born; their Law foreshadowed the Law which this Redeemer was to found; their ritual, their rites and ceremonies had their efficacy only with reference to him; their priests went before him, their teachers told of him, their very king was what he was only as representative of the great King that was to establish the true kingdom; while others were also "sons of David," he was to be "the Son of David" in the greatest

sense. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, indeed it could scarcely have been otherwise, that the Psalms, expressing as they do the religious mind of the Jewish people, should constantly bear two senses, one the immediate sense as applied to the moment, the other a deeper and more significant sense, as the reader saw in it a reference to the Messias that was to be the consummation of all.

This is true of the Psalms in general; of some in particular the prophetic idea is so prominent that it would seem quite impossible to find any other explanation. Take, for example, the idea of the king as the Psalms express it. Probably not one of these "king" Psalms can be dated with certainty; we have no definite application to any special king that reigned; terms are used of him, his ideal perfection, his eternal attributes, which not even Asiatic exaggeration can explain; and yet he is sung of as one that certainly is or will be, not a poetic fancy, but one to whom the psalmist owes glad and loving allegiance. It is this feature of the Psalms which makes them prayers for all time; they were not for any particular age or generation, the praise of any particular ruling monarch; the Jews themselves in using them utterly ignored their date of composition; and today we sing them, because of their reference to Christ our Lord, with the same regularity and enthusiasm as did the Jews themselves. Nowhere does the rationalist find greater difficulty in explaining away the Scriptures than in some of the passages of the Psalms.

The same must be said of the wonderful Psalms which foretell the Passion of our Lord; frankly no explanation of them has been given, not by the cleverest unbeliever, which in any way justifies their creation, and their preservation in the Jewish liturgy, except the fact that they expressed what the Jews themselves believed, the coming of a Redeemer foredoomed to suffering. And in this sense it is worth our while to notice that our

Lord himself interpreted the Psalms; nor did anyone complain of him for so doing. When his enemies questioned and found fault, he quoted a Psalm and asked them what it meant; a modern rationalist might find an answer, but the rationalist of that time knew the Psalms better than they; and they were silenced by their knowledge. When he was himself in the midst of his Passion, he supported himself by quotations from the Psalms; and those who heard him understood. When all was over, it was by means of the Psalms especially that his followers recognised their true King, their foretold Messias.

Lastly, there are certain Psalms which are sometimes called the Psalms of "The Son of Man"; these again are such as would seem to be Messianic in the strictest sense, and practically nothing else. They have a distinct character before them; but he is no longer the King or the Sufferer: he is the perfect Man, in whom we recognise at last the consummation of our race, as it were the justification of our existence, and in whom we shall attain to that which we have lost in Adam. It is wellnigh impossible to give to these Psalms any other interpretation than that of deliberate prophecy.

Who was the author of the Psalms? They are called the Psalms of David, and many ancient writers—St Ambrose, St Augustine, and others—assumed them to have been written by him. But many more from the beginning have seen that this could not be, and now no commentator believes them to have been composed by one man or at the same period of time. In the first place, many Psalms expressly speak of a different authorship; in the second place, many Psalms are obviously repetitions of others with alterations, enlarged editions, as it were, of former works. Lastly, the alterations are so marked and deliberate, especially in the use of the name for God and the Lord, that one may safely

say that the new edition has been deliberately written at a much later date, to suit the language of an entirely different generation.

## 3. The Wisdom Books Proper

Between the Psalms and the series of the Prophets there come five books, all of more or less the same nature, which may be called the Wisdom Books Proper of the Old Testament. Their origin in each case is obscure, but this is a matter of little importance; they contain lessons for all time, and are in a true sense the accumulation of the best practical teaching of ancient times. Many Scripture students would have us devote ourselves to their contents if we would really gain the wisdom of the ancients; perhaps an exaggerated piece of advice, though it shows how much these books are valued by men of thought and spiritual insight. A word about each will suffice.

### *Proverbs.*

The Book of Proverbs is made up of several "Collections of Wise Sayings," which, it seems obvious, were not written by the same person nor at the same time. It is not a treatise on wisdom; it is no more than a gathering together of human comments based on the standard of the Jewish Law. In consequence, to those trained according to the New Law, its teaching may often seem not on any high level. But the times and the circumstances must be considered; in any case, it lets us see the true ideals of the Old Law, without the trappings which afterwards proved its ruin. Moreover, it contains much that is distinctly prophetic; ideals and personifications are given which only find their fulfilment in Christ and the Church.

In various places of the book its authorship is attributed

to Solomon. If we accept that the whole is a compilation coming from various sources, then there is good reason to suppose that the actual sections attributed to Solomon were written by him. This much is certain, that those portions of the book are very ancient indeed.

### *Ecclesiastes.*

The Book of Ecclesiastes, "The Preacher," is a difficult book to understand; even to the ancient Jews it seemed to give some trouble, and many were inclined to reject it as unworthy of being preserved. But the difficulty of the book lies in this, that the illustrations on one side are so strong as to make us lose sight of the general drift of the whole. That drift is ably summed up for us by an able modern writer as follows:

1. All is vanity except to lead a happy life.

This is maintained by various proofs.

2. We lead a happy life by making a right use of the gifts of God, and of the kind of life which he has arranged for us.

3. Remember that everything is his gift, and that in the end he will judge us on the way we have used it.

The permanent tradition among the Jews always was that this book was written by Solomon. St Jerome, moreover, accepted it as undoubtedly his, joining it with the Book of Proverbs and the Canticle. He considered the three to form a kind of single whole in three parts: one, Proverbs, for youth; Ecclesiastes for grown-up people; the Canticle for the aged. But recent critics have maintained that it is much later than Solomon, basing their argument chiefly on the comparatively modern style of the Hebrew in which it is written.

### *The Canticle of Canticles.*

In the Anglican Version of the Bible this book is called the Song of Songs. It is a wedding song, written in the language and style of the East, which sees more beauty and art in material colour and parallels than does the West, and delights in pictures which to a Western mind seem merely voluptuous. In form it is a dialogue, Spouse and Beloved answering one another in turn. Often it is difficult to say where one speaker ends and the other begins; a fact which has afforded matter of discussion among commentators in every generation.

There are few books in the Bible whose interpretation have given rise to so much controversy as the Canticle of Canticles. From a very early time it began to be taken literally, and commentators in the West, the more they have fallen from the faith, and consequently the more they have lost the spiritual sense, have tended more and more to look upon this book as nothing else but a love song. But a very little acquaintance with the southern Asiatic mind makes the interpretation clear enough. It begins with the mind; words are sought, not strictly to express that mind, not strictly to say exactly what it thinks, but, as it were to photograph the idea, to express the thought of one order in a parallel of another. Just as in mathematics $x$ may stand for a number, so in Asiatic poetry a picture may stand for many things which are seen through and beyond it.

In this way one may see the true interpretation of the Canticle. The author is filled with the idea of the love that exists between God and the human soul. He looks about him and sees a parallel in the love between a bridegroom and bride. Regardless of consequences, he develops this second picture, his mind being all the time fixed on the other. That parallel of detail does not exist is no concern of his; all he has in mind is the fullest expression of human love on its own plane, adding:

And the love which I have in mind transcends all this. We call it allegory, or what we will; this method of speaking of and expressing things divine pervades all Hindu religion, philosophy, and poetry; and the Asiatic treats merely with contempt and disgust the European who takes scandal at the crude details of his art.

From the earliest times this poem was always attributed to Solomon; all the ancient versions expressly speak of it as his. Since the Reformation a tendency has set in to give it a much later date; but this is nothing strange, and the arguments used are exactly the same, and of the same value, as those used against the date of other books. As before, moreover, we may say that the discussion is of little importance for us; whatever its date, the Canticle of Canticles is part of the Bible.

### *Wisdom.*

The Book of Wisdom seems to have been originally written in Greek. On this account, or rather because it is not found in the Hebrew text, it was rejected by the leaders of the Reformation from the Canon of the Bible. But by tradition, and by the authority of the Church, it is retained; and this is supported (1) not only by the fact that in the earliest Christian lists of the Canon it is regularly found, (2) but also by the frequent and authoritative use made of it by St Paul.

Commentators have been fond of contrasting the Book of Wisdom with the Book of Ecclesiastes. We have already spoken of the difficulty of understanding this book, owing to the fact that the illustrations seem to conceal the main argument; the author of the Book of Wisdom seems in many places to be trying to correct the false impression produced by Ecclesiastes. Thus, Wisdom itself and its fruits are extolled in this book in contrast to the apparent disparagement of the former; the refrain, " Vanity of vanities," characteristic of Ecclesi-

astes, is here set aside for a more cheerful and hopeful view of life; while this book clings more to the Hebrew tradition, and the joyful dependence on God, than does the other.

It is almost impossible to make any satisfactory analysis of this book. It abounds in most beautiful passages, exhortations to seek after true Wisdom, contrasts between the Wise and the Foolish—*i.e.*, the Good and the Evil-living, praises of Wisdom itself, and of its working in Hebrew history, and the like. By Wisdom the author means that sound understanding of the significance of life which leads a man to depend on God. Compared with the other preceding Wisdom books one may say this one is decidedly more modern; it shows a clear knowledge of Greek thought, it uses terms which are common in Greek philosophy but are unknown in Hebrew, sometimes it speaks of God in a way that would be strange to the more ancient Jews.

On this account St Jerome seems to decide that its authorship is Greek and that it was written in the Greek language. Others go further, and, on the same evidence, attribute to the book a comparatively late date. This may be easily accepted, all the more as it is the view of St Augustine and St Jerome. The common idea seems to be that it was written some two centuries before the coming of our Lord.

### *Ecclesiasticus.*

The Book of Ecclesiasticus is the last of the Wisdom books, and to most students of the Old Testament is by far the most popular. It abounds in passages of great beauty, while its lengthy meditations on the heroes of old give it an exceptional value for the interpreter of Scripture. Few books of ancient times so appeal to the modern mind as does this Book of Ecclesiasticus.

The meaning of the title is not clear. In the Hebrew it appears to have been called " The Wisdom of Sirach ";

the early Fathers called it "The Ecclesiastical Book," and the word seems to have remained. From the Prologue we learn that an author, whose name is unknown, offers to us in its pages a version or translation of a work by his "grandfather, Jesus, the Son of Sirach." The version which has come down to us is in Greek; but it was always well known that there was an original Hebrew version, indeed, that the book was written in Hebrew. Of late years some of this Hebrew version has been discovered. From various references we are able to conclude that the "Son of Sirach" lived about 180 B.C., his grandson, the translator into Greek, perhaps about 120 B.C.

It is impossible to give any satisfactory analysis of the contents of this book. Like its predecessors, it contains the accumulated wisdom of a thoughtful man, gathered from long and varied experience, all tending to the praise of an upright life and the cultivation of virtues. The latter portion of the book breaks away into the praises of past heroes of Bible history, whose lives are examples of the virtues he has inculcated. At the same time, throughout the book, far more than in the other Wisdom books, the praise of God is over all, his greatness in himself, in his dealings with men, and the meanness of man by comparison.

Like the Book of Wisdom and some others which have been mentioned, this book also was rejected from the Canon of the Bible by the leaders of the Protestant Reformation, as before the argument being that the book does not appear in the Hebrew Canon. To this we answer (1) that the authority of the Church has declared it to be a genuine part of Scripture, (2) that numerous quotations from it by the writers of the New Testament justify and confirm this decision, (3) that to the early Christian writers the book seems to have been among the most familiar and most quoted.

It will be seen that it is virtually impossible to give an adequate idea of the Wisdom books in a brief essay

such as this. One might adopt another plan, and endeavour to give the spirit of each author; this would in many ways be more satisfactory, and would produce better results, but it would be outside the scope of these studies. All we aim at here is to give an account of the Bible and its parts, and owing to their nature the Wisdom books must suffer. Only by reading them can any idea be gained of their scope and contents.

# V.—THE MAJOR PROPHETS

## 1. The Prophets in General

WHEN we come to deal with the prophets it is important that we should understand what the Jews exactly meant by the term. To us prophecy is generally understood as a foretelling of some future event; and in the Scriptures we are inclined to restrict this still more to the foretelling of Jesus the Messias and the kingdom he was to found. But to the Jews this was but a part, and in some sense perhaps the least important part, of the prophet's mission. To them the prophet was rather the voice of God among men; the man who spoke " for " God, who took his place, who was his Messenger—Aggeus describes himself as " the Messenger of the Lord " —and what he said was taken as the guiding word of God, whether he spoke of the future or of the present.

Moreover, to the Jews the prophets were looked upon as a class apart, almost as we today might regard the members of a religious order. There were schools of the prophets, " sons of the prophets "; some special training was evidently expected of him who wished to join this class; and though the prophets whose names and writings have come down to us were by no means all trained in these schools, still there were many more who were. These latter usually stood high in public esteem; from them, very often, the king's advisers, the writers of the chronicles, and other public officials were chosen.

In the third place, as has just been hinted, the prophets whose writings we possess form but a small section of the whole. Long before they begin—for they are almost all of comparatively modern date—there had been

many others who appear to have had even a greater influence on their generation; among them we have but to mention such men as Samuel in the days of Saul, Nathan in the days of David, Elias in the reign of Achab, and his disciple Eliseus, to realise that from the beginning God raised up these guides of the Chosen People and protectors of his Law.

It is usual to divide the prophets whose writings are preserved into two divisions, the Major and the Minor Prophets. This division is a matter of convenience and no more; the Major Prophets being those whose works occupy a large portion of the Bible, while the Minor Prophets cover but a few pages each. For the study of the prophets it is also well to remind ourselves of their dates and circumstances. Thus for the Major Prophets here considered:

1. Isaias:
   - (i.) Prophesied between 750 and 700 B.C.
   - (ii.) When the Jews were being overwhelmed by by the Assyrians.
   - (iii.) Chiefly in the reign of Ezechias.
2. Jeremias:
   - (i.) Prophesied between 630 and 580 B.C.
   - (ii.) When Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians.
3. Ezechiel:
   - (i.) Prophesied between 600 and 570.
   - (ii.) To the Jews who had been taken into Captivity.
4. Daniel:
   - (i.) Prophesied between 600 and 540 B.C.
   - (ii.) Also to the Jews of the Captivity.
5. Baruch was the secretary of Jeremias and therefore belongs to his date.

## 2. The Major Prophets

### *Isaias.*

From whatever point of view it be considered, it must be allowed that the Book of Isaias the Prophet stands among the very great writings of the world. As an historical monument it records the crisis of a great nation's existence; as literature its thought is sublime, its poetry of the finest and deepest, its language and expression bear comparison with the grandest of Greek tragedy; while apart from its inspiration, its distinctly prophetic nature, its place in the Canon of the Old Testament, as a spiritual book it yields to none that has ever been written in the pure ideals it proclaims, the mingled contrition and hope that it stirs, the depths alike of joy and of mourning that it fathoms, the noble longings of the human soul that it expresses, in its vision of the future, whether in this world or in the next. To understand the Book of Isaias is to grasp the key at once to the Old Testament and to the New, for nowhere else in the Bible is the essence of every phrase of the Old Dispensation so concentrated as here; while as for the New, the Evangelists themselves, and St Paul with them, let us see clearly enough, by quotation after quotation, and reference after reference, how much they made use of the Prophet Isaias to guide them in their interpretation of the New Covenant.

Who was Isaias? As usual with the prophets, we do not know for certain. His name means "Salvation of the Lord," whether it was his actual name, or the title under which he was known. He tells us himself that he was "the son of Amos," but by that must not be understood that he was the son of the older prophet so called; Jewish tradition adds that he was of the royal house, but beyond oral tradition there is no further proof;

the evidence of his writings further shows that, unlike most of the prophets, he was highly educated, as well as of great natural gifts; later tradition says that he suffered martyrdom, being sawn in two at the command of an evil king, for denouncing his evil ways; more than this we do not know. The gaunt figure stands out alone on the horizon; it begins its message with thunder and lightning; as the drama advances it pours out its attack on its people's foes from every side; it sees the doom coming on, the darkness which cannot be longer averted, yet as it stoops to the inevitable it proclaims the joy of the coming dawn, the glory which shall appear, and the freedom which shall be won for man, whatever the enemy may do, yes, though man himself is proved to be unworthy to possess them.

But though Isaias himself is hidden, the times in which he wrote, and the significance of his book, are clear; and recent research seems continually to add more to our knowledge of his age and surroundings. He lived in the days before the great overthrow, the Babylonian Captivity. Assyria was a dominant empire in the North, Egypt in the South; Israel lay as a buffer state between the two, with the sea on one side, the desert on the other, so that the greater nations could hardly join battle with each other except upon its soil. To the ordinary student of history the wonder is, not that in the end Israel perished, but that it had survived so long, and had not been absorbed centuries before by one or another of its more powerful neighbours, all of whom in turn were keenly aware of its political and military importance. Still it had lived on; thus far the hand of God had protected his chosen people; had they been faithful, not all the might of Assyria or of Egypt would have destroyed them.

But a change had come. The history of the kingdoms of Israel and Juda is a long tale of a nation's infidelity, of a falling away from a great ideal, from an ideal on which the whole of its spirit had been built. There had been

constant lapses, even into the low paganism with which it was surrounded; and though it is true there had been many national revivals, yet with each new falling away the life of the nation had been more and more sapped. By the time of Isaias its place as the Chosen One of God had been all but forgotten; for its safety it looked rather to alliance with powers without than either to its own strength or to trust in God; and the courts of its kings had become little else than centres of intrigue, and faction, and diplomatic speculating, as the greater nations courted the little nation's power and the little nation calculated how it could sell itself to the best advantage. The morals of Israel had indeed sunk very low.

Suddenly in the midst of this a voice is heard calling rulers and people alike to a recollection of themselves and their high calling. It is not their enemies they have to fear, so much as themselves; their reliance is vain if it is placed on any of the great nations, they must rely on themselves and God. He has saved them in the past; if they will be what they are by their vocation bound to be, he will save them in the future. They need have no anxiety; let them leave Assyria and her offers, for Assyria will be one day overthrown; Babylon, the Philistines, Egypt, Arabia, all in turn will perish. Yet, no, the prophet seems to say to himself; he sees that his words will be in vain. Cry as he will, his people will not hear; they will follow their human prudence and will come to ruin; they will meet the fate that others have met, and will one day be carried into captivity and death.

This is the burthen of the first half of the book, but the prophet does not stop here. Even in the midst of his early threats and cries he can scarcely keep his eyes off the dawn breaking on the distant horizon. Suddenly he gives himself free play. The doom is inevitable; the people must be punished; there is no other way to their conversion. Then let it come, and then let it go. In the first part he has warned men of its coming; in the second

he assumes that it has come, and then he proclaims the revival that will follow. Even before they are yet taken captive he announces to them their deliverance. First a king, Cyrus, shall set them free; then in the days ahead shall arise a greater Cyrus, whose name shall be the honoured of all ages, whose liberation shall extend to all the world; yes, even the very heathen nations which brought about the ruin of his people shall rejoice in his coming and in the glory of his Kingdom.

This is the outline of the book. Not that it is a continuous whole; both from internal evidence, and from the nature of the prophecies themselves, it is obvious that they were pronounced at different times, and with different objects in view. But still there is a distinct unity into which the parts are fitted; the book leads steadily to its end; from the threat of doom to the redemption after it one may easily see the hand of the editor at work, putting together the scattered pieces.

For this reason, perhaps more than any other book in Scripture, the Prophecy of Isaias lends itself most readily to the craze for dissection conspicuous among certain inadvertent critics. And they have dissected with a will. The glaring nature of the prophecies have been a scandal to them; such explicit declarations of the future could never be suffered to remain unchallenged. Accordingly attempts have been made to show that the work has no real unity; that its text is hopelessly corrupt and mutilated, and has been added to as time has gone on; that it is the work of more hands than one, perhaps of very many, and these separated from one another by generations. Of course, the old argument is again adduced, that the language of the various parts betrays a difference of authorship.

But by no means do all scholars accept these conclusions; on the contrary, there is probably not one about which two are entirely agreed. Instead, we have the evidence of the Jews themselves, to whom this book

was a whole, and as such was always understood and interpreted. We have the evidence of contemporary history; more and more, as discoveries are made, are we driven to accept the truth of Isaias. Lastly, to conclude all in a summary, there is scarcely any book in the Bible which hangs together as does Isaias, in such a manner that if one part is removed another comes to have no meaning.

But it is impossible, and unprofitable, to spend time on such discussions. We do not think that any fair-minded reader of Isaias can doubt its authorship; the beauty of its style, the rich variety of its imagery, betray the same hand from beginning to end. More than any other he has filled the language with proverbial phrases; there seems an instinct to quote from him as an Englishman tends to quote from Shakespeare. He is daring, startling, in his use of figures; and they pile themselves on one another with a richness that is wellnigh unique.

### *Jeremias.*

The Prophecy of Jeremias, with the Lamentations, marks this prophet as one of the great masters of language of all time. His sentences seem to tumble along in their own rough, uneven way; yet as they move they reveal a style quite unique and overwhelming, and they teem with an imagery, a use of symbol, a dramatic interchange of speakers, from time to time an outburst of prayer rising hot from the heart in spite of circumstances, all of which win for their author a place in the first rank of poets. So tremendous and impressive is he, especially in his denunciations, his warnings, and his cries of anguish when the doom has fallen which he has struggled in vain to avert, that on a first reading one is disposed to consider him a melancholy genius. But when we study him more closely it is astonishing to discover the songs of hope and consolation that appear; condemned as he was to be the

prophet of the Jews through the period of their greatest upheaval, he nevertheless never forgot both the faithful God who ruled all, and the fulfilment of the Promise that was yet to come.

Jerusalem was captured by the Chaldæans in 588 B.C., and the Jews were carried off into captivity. For forty years before that date Jeremias had been prophesying, warning the faithless people of what would be their doom unless they made haste to repent. The reign of Ezechias had been long and prosperous; it was followed by the still longer reign of Manasses, which was also a reign of iniquity. Next came Josias, a good king, and with him the prophet Jeremias; it was God's last offer to a people rushing to its ruin. From the first the prophet was under no delusion; he knew that he spoke to a people who would not hear; his declaration of the captivity, of the seventy years of exile, was explicit. The people might think themselves secure; there seemed to be no enemies about them that they need fear; the Temple was theirs and with it they were safe; the very statesmen had gone to sleep, careless of everything that concerned their country's safety. Jeremias, in the midst of it all, loving his nation, and all that it implied, with a passionate love, denounces this lethargy, this false security, this defying of the punishment that awaits their evil lives.

In the end the crash came. Egypt on one side, the Babylonian Empire on the other; between the two the kingdom of Juda was crushed to death, and its remnants —king, nobility, people, the vessels of the Temple— were carried off by the king of Babylon. All the time the prophet told them it would be so, though the signs were all against him, though a shrewd statesman would have said that Egypt was likely to gain the upper hand.

Beyond giving this general historical setting to the prophecies of Jeremias it is very difficult to say much more. The book contains a series of prophecies, given at different times and under different circumstances,

with here and there some historical link or setting. The order in which the prophecies occurred is much disputed; the very order of the accepted text differs widely in the Hebrew and Greek originals. To this problem no satisfactory answer is given, nor does any seem possible.

### *Lamentations.*

To anyone who becomes at all in sympathy with Hebrew poetry, there are few books in Scripture more fascinating, looked at as mere literature, than the Book of the Lamentations of Jeremias. Though a later writer ascribed to them another origin, we may take it as certain that they are songs in which the prophet bewails the ruin of his beloved city. In number they are five, and are constructed after a manner well known to Hebrew scholars. In the first, second, and fourth Lamentations each new verse begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet, so that the length of the alphabet gives the length of the Lamentation. The third differs from the others in that each letter is repeated three times, thus making the Lamentation itself about three times as long. The fifth is a beautiful prayer, and is not written in the same form as its predecessors.

In the first ode the poet simply describes and laments over the destruction of Jerusalem. The blow has fallen; there is nothing left to be done but to sit by the ruins and wail. In the second he looks at the scene of desolation from God's side; yes, the anger of God has indeed been poured out; but not without cause, not without overwhelming justice. In the third he takes the point of view of the sufferers. They acknowledge that the guilt is theirs; they recognise that God is righteous: even while he strikes, seemingly to utter destruction, they put their trust in him. In the fourth ode, gathering all together, there seems to be woven throughout a kind of contrast, between what the Chosen People might have been and

what they had actually brought upon themselves; yet at the end, with all the shame, the poet sings of restoration. In the fifth and last we have the prophet's prayer for his people, acknowledging their guilt, but full of hope.

There is little room for doubt that the author of the Prophecy of Jeremias is also the author of the Lamentations. The subject and ideas in both are the same, the style of illustration is alike, the very language is not only identical, but at times passages in one seem an echo of passages in the other. Indeed, were it not for a peculiar misconception, it is doubtful whether its authenticity would ever have been called seriously into question. The misconception is this: in the early canons of Scripture the Book of Lamentations is very seldom mentioned; in the modern Hebrew Bible it occurs in quite another place. But the explanation is clear. The early canons do not mention it because they assume it to be part of the Prophecies, and not a different book; the Hebrew Bible puts it in another place for the purposes of the liturgy. This was recognised in very early times.

### *Baruch.*

The prophet Jeremias had a devoted secretary named Baruch. In several places of the Prophecies he is mentioned as remaining always loyal to his master in his hours of greatest distress; as writing out prophecies at their author's dictation; as receiving special comfort from Jeremias when he himself was in trouble. Evidently the friendship between these two was one of those memories which had remained with the Jews, even as the memory of David and Jonathan.

Following on the Prophecy and Lamentations of Jeremias there comes, in the Catholic but not in the non-Catholic Bible, a kind of appendix to these two, known as the Book or Prophecy of Baruch. In the first place,

apart from anything else, it is a very beautiful book. Baruch appears before the captives of Babylon; his words stir them to repentance, and they send back to Jerusalem things they had taken away, asking at the same time for prayers, not for themselves only, but for the Babylonian king and his son.

This is given by way of introduction. Then come the contents proper of the book, which consist of (1) a prayer of the people confessing their guilt, acknowledging the perfect justice of God, and pleading for mercy; (2) an exhortation to the scattered Jews, bidding them to learn true wisdom from the misfortunes they have suffered, to keep the law of God which is the practice of wisdom, and hence to hope and even to rejoice in the certainty that Jerusalem will rise again. At the end there comes a long epistle of Jeremias himself, which seems to have no connection with what has gone before, but must be read as an independent letter.

We have said that Baruch is not in the non-Catholic Canon of Scripture, but in the Catholic Canon has always found a place. Like the Lamentations, it was often included under the common title "Jeremias," and so was not always mentioned by name; the evidence that it was generally accepted and quoted by the early Fathers of the Church is abundant. On the other hand, it must be confessed that there is much difficulty about the authorship of the book. Though it is possible to defend its assumed date, and to say that it was written at the time of the Captivity, and though it seems certain that much at least of the book was originally written in Hebrew, still there are many who maintain that it was really of a comparatively later date, and that just as the later books of Wisdom were attributed to Solomon, and the later Psalms to David, so this later book of prayer and exhortation was attributed to the companion of the prophet.

### *Ezechiel.*

There is round the prophet Ezechiel a certain special brilliance as of a halo. Writing as he does in the midst of the Babylonian Exile, with little human prospect before his people, and with nothing to look for from those in power, still there is none of the lamentation of Jeremias in his prophecy; all is full of the fidelity of God, and therefore in the end all must end well. With almost monotonous insistency he dwells on the same refrain; since he has nothing at hand with which to drive it home, he lives and speaks almost entirely in an atmosphere of symbol. Other prophets now and then performed symbolic acts and then explained their meaning to the people; Ezechiel would almost seem to have made this the chief occupation of his life.

And as his life is made symbolic, so his language is even more highly figured than is that of the other prophets. He abounds in parables; his prophecies are almost all given in parabolic form; when he speaks of the future of the Church of God, symbol and parable combine in a halo of mystery; he anticipates St John, both in his Gospel and in his Apocalypse; indeed it is not difficult to see that the two are kindred souls, though they write six centuries apart, and six centuries so momentous.

Ezechiel lived and prophesied, as we have just said, during the sad days of the Babylonian Captivity—*i.e.*, some time after 600 B.C. Jeremias had long been dead; he himself had been among those who had been carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon. Meantime great external changes had taken place. The kingdom of Assyria had passed away; the Babylonian Empire was at its height; but already in the East the Medes and Persians were making themselves known, and were soon to swallow up the present power. Away in the south-west Jerusalem still stood, derelict but not entirely destroyed; the remnant

that remained there was foolish in its hopefulness, while those in exile were almost as extreme in their despair.

To both of these Ezechiel speaks. Let Jerusalem not deceive itself; it shall yet be utterly destroyed. Let the exiles not be too downcast; out of this destruction shall yet appear the glory of the Lord. Thus the Book of Ezechiel may be divided into three main sections. There are the prophecies before the final doom of the city, in which the prophet sees in spirit its prevailing wickedness, and the punishment which needs must follow; yet, characteristically, all the time he watches the small number of the faithful, and the regeneration that must come through them and for their sakes. Punishment inevitable, restoration certain, no matter how impossible it may seem, this is the running refrain of the first part; and as he works back to his conclusion there appears the doctrine, now more manifest than in any preceding prophet, of personal responsibility for sin.

In the second part, no sooner is the city finally destroyed, than Ezechiel turns upon her exultant destroyers. They need not rejoice; their doom is imminent; in spite of their greatness they shall be brought low; while Juda shall yet survive. Then in the third part come the prophecies of consolation. Thick and fast the parables are poured out and the assurances given; from first to last it is the language of triumph, once the death of Jerusalem has been completed; the transformation is as that between Good Friday night and Easter Sunday morning. The whole concludes with a description of the Temple as it will be in the days of the Messias; an idealised picture which again finds its counterpart in the Apocalypse of St John.

## *Daniel.*

The Book of Daniel is full of many problems, which only scholars can attempt to face. At the same time, in spite of many critics, we venture to say that these prob-

lems are more apparent than real; more on the surface than fundamental. If once it is accepted that the book as we now possess it is in some confusion, if once an accurate edition could be produced to satisfy all schools of thought, we believe much of the difficulty of Daniel would vanish.

The prophet himself lived in Babylon during the Captivity, partly a contemporary of Ezechiel, partly succeeding him. He possessed a special gift of wisdom, which made him conspicuous even at the royal court; because of this gift he was placed in high authority, and was treated even as a prince. When Babylon fell, and the Medes and Persians came into power, Daniel was kept in authority; such is the background upon which the book may be read and rearranged.

For first of all to the reader of Daniel it is obvious that the book is arranged in no historical order. Still, three main divisions seem clear. In the first we are told the chief wonders performed by Daniel in the Babylonian courts—the two famous dreams of Nabuchodonosor and their interpretation; the refusal to worship his statue, and the consequent story of the three walking safe in the fire; the handwriting on the wall at the feast of Baltasar; Daniel in the lions' den. There is a completeness about these chapters which gives one the impression that they are intended to stand alone.

The second part contains the famous four visions of Daniel. The first is of the four beasts, which are destroyed by the " Ancient of Days," who in turn bestows " glory and a kingdom " on one " like the son of man." In the second the ram from the East is conquered by the goat from the West; and Daniel is informed by the Angel Gabriel that this foreshadows the destruction of the Persians by the Greeks. After which will come four kingdoms, of which one is to be that of the Messias. The third vision is again from Gabriel; it is the famous one in which is foretold the date of the coming of the

Messias. In the fourth we are again foretold the history of the nations, until the Romans shall come and absorb them all.

The third part is an appendix; it contains the story of Susanna, of the priests of Bel and the Dragon, and some other additions which are very difficult to locate.

In addition to the fact that the book as we have it is in no historical order, further mystery hangs round it in that it has come down to us with different parts written in different languages; some parts are in Hebrew, some in Chaldaic, some only in Greek, and no satisfactory reason seems forthcoming why some should be in one language, some apparently only in another. Again, in some parts we have extraordinary changes of construction, as if the author had forgotten whether he were writing in his own person or in another's. There are, moreover, strange repetitions; at times strange echoes of other parts of the Bible; altogether, as we have said, the Book of Daniel is loaded with surface problems.

Nevertheless, even through these very problems, the scope of Daniel is abundantly clear. He lived in the midst of a captive and a broken people. Around them was all the pomp and splendour and seeming triumph of Babylon, the enemy of God, while they, the Chosen People, were, even after their repentance, still crushed and downtrodden. Had God, then, finally deserted them? After all, what was come of the Promise? To both these questions Daniel makes answer. Yes, God was there, not only over all, but actually interfering in the very lives and dispositions of those who ignored him. He was there, arranging the present and the future, so that the angel could tell them to the day when the promise would be finally fulfilled. No prophet is more definite, none more emphatic, none more detailed, than Daniel; so detailed is he, that some would assert the whole book to have been written after the events foretold had been accomplished.

It is impossible here to go into all the problems; it is enough to know that through them all there runs a sense of security, even more than is felt in other prophetical books. There is firmness in the description of God, the Creator, the Ancient of Days, the Ruler of the nations; firmness, too, in the account of sin, the teaching of Ezechiel being taken up, and the means of forgiveness more definitely given. Perhaps most of all is the Book of Daniel conspicuous for the prominence it gives to angels, especially to the Angel Gabriel, thus uniting in him the prophecy of the coming of the Messias with the Annunciation later to our Lady. Difficult as it is, there are few books of the Old Testament more full of interest than the Book of Daniel.

# VI.—THE MINOR PROPHETS

## Introduction

AT the end of the section of the Bible dealing with the prophets occur twelve smaller books of prophecies under twelve names. These have come to be called "The Minor Prophets," not because they are in any way less important than others, or than other parts of the Bible, but simply because they are shorter.

There is probably no part of the Bible about which theorists have written more "views" than about the minor prophets. The historical evidence, internal and external, is so vague that a critic with an imagination can build up all kinds of pictures: of their circumstances, their occasion, their object, and even their meaning. Not long ago a Scottish scholar wrote a history of the minor prophets, giving the date of each, the condition of the times which called forth the successive prophecies, the effects of the prophets on their times, and much more. It was a most interesting book, written with a certainty and assurance that carried conviction; the only misfortune was that from the first page to the last there was not a particle of historical evidence, beyond an assumed allusion in the prophets themselves.

In discussing the minor prophets, therefore, it is important to bear this in mind. Had we sound historical ground to go upon, it would obviously be more satisfactory to study them in their historical setting. But in matter of fact, no matter how positively some critics write, we have no such historical ground; to some of the prophets we can assign no definite date within two or three hundred years; the very references to

their surroundings are of the vaguest, and usually depend for their interpretation on a bright idea of some modern critic and nothing more. Hence in these notes it is only useful to bear in mind certain broad facts, which may here be repeated for the sake of reference:

1. About 950 B.C. the Kingdom of the Jews divided into two, the Kingdom of Israel in the North, the Kingdom of Juda in the South, with Jerusalem as its capital.

2. In 722 B.C. the Northern Kingdom of Israel came to an end, being destroyed by the Assyrians, and the people being taken into captivity.

3. In 588 B.C. Jerusalem and the Southern Kingdom of Juda were destroyed by the Babylonians, and the people were led away captive to Babylon.

4 In 538 B.C. came the first Edict of Restoration under Cyrus the Persian.

5. In 458 B.C. Esdras began the Restoration of Jerusalem.

It is therefore useful, if possible, to discover (i.) which of the prophets belonged to the Northern Kingdom of Israel; (ii.) which belonged to the Southern Kingdom of Juda; (iii.) which may be said to have belonged to both; (iv.) which came during the Captivity, which came after. So far as modern scholarship is able to decide, the following would seem to be the division:

1. Prophets of the Kingdom of Israel, 950-722 B.C.:

About 800 B.C. Abdias.
,, 800 B.C. Jonas.
,, 800-750 B.C. Amos.
,, 790-720 B.C. Osee.

2. Prophets of the Kingdom of Juda, 950-588 B.C.:

About 800 B.C. Joel.
„ 759-699 B.C. Isaias.
„ 640 B.C. Nahum.
„ 640 B.C. Habacuc.
„ 640 B.C. Sophonias.
„ 628-585 B.C. Jeremias.

3. Prophet of both Kingdoms:

About 750-720 B.C. Micheas.

4. Prophets of the Captivity, 588-500 B.C.:

About 595-574 B.C. Ezechiel.
„ 606-534 B.C. Daniel.
„ 519 B.C. Aggeus.
„ 519 B.C. Zacharias.

5. After the Restoration, 458 B.C.:

About 450 B.C. Malachias.

With these divisions before us, it is easier and more useful to give a short summary of what is known of each minor prophet, without involving ourselves in too much conjecture or guess-work, and at the same time saving freedom of opinion from the bondage of false history.

### Abdias

This is the shortest of the prophecies; it is not therefore surprising that it gives us little clue as to its date and circumstances. It is written in wonderfully vivid and vigorous language; as such alone it deserves to be preserved. It is a denunciation of the pride of Edom; in spite of its seemingly impregnable position, from which it looks down on all around, the day will soon come when it shall be destroyed. Then shall the tables

be turned; Edom has rejoiced in the humbling of Jacob, Jacob shall then rejoice in the humiliation of Edom. Nay more, the day will come when the sons of Jacob shall consume the inheritance of Esau.

For the date of this prophecy scholars seem mainly divided between two opinions, one of which would put it as far back as 800 B.C., when Jerusalem seems to have been sacked by the Arabians, the other placing it in the reign of Nabuchodonosor, about 600 B.C. On the whole, perhaps the earlier date would seem to be most in keeping with the little evidence we have.

## Jonas

The prophecy of Jonas has given occasion to much controversy. It is different from all the others; it is not so much a prophecy as the story of some incidents in the life of a prophet; and that story is so strange that even the most credulous reader is compelled to ask himself what exactly it may mean. There is little or no clue within the book, either to its own date, or to the events of which it speaks, or to its interpretation; whether, for instance, it is to be taken as a literal fact, or, as with the Book of Job, it is rather a dramatic representation of a great idea.

On the other hand, there are few books of the Old Testament which were evidently more familiar to, and more cherished by, the Jews of our Lord's time than the Book of Jonas; and even among ourselves there are few incidents in the Bible better known than the fortunes of this prophet. The story of his being cast into the sea and swallowed by the fish; of his preaching in Ninive and his success, much to his own disappointment; of the growing and withering of the gourd, and the lesson God taught his prophet from it—all these are familiar to every reader. And whatever interpretation is put upon them, whether they be taken as historical facts or not, and if

facts, when and where they happened, this much is certain; there is probably no book in the Old Testament which so brings home to us the patience of God with individual sinners, first with the prophet Jonas himself, who feared and failed to do his duty; then with the unbelieving people of Ninive, who were not of the "Chosen People," whose ways were very evil indeed, and yet who, because they repented on the preaching of the strange prophet, were shown every mercy; and, lastly, in the general teaching of the Lord himself about Jonas, when he declares how much he grieves over souls that perish.

Lastly there is the importance of the prophet himself. That he did actually live, and that he made a deep impression on his times, is proved from the allusion to him in the Fourth Book of Kings and in Ecclesiasticus. Again the nature of his doctrine, proclaiming the value of individual penance, holding out salvation to the Gentiles, and showing the relation between God and the sinner, makes one recognise in Jonas an anticipation of the New Dispensation. Last and greatest of all, twice at least does our Lord speak of Jonas as a type of himself. Perhaps the conclusion we should draw would be that no book of the Old Testament more represents the Asiatic mind, and therefore needs more to be considered with sympathy by the more literal Western critic.

## Amos

The prophet Amos tells us much more about himself than either Osee or Joel. By upbringing he was a herdsman; though he was an inhabitant of the Kingdom of Juda, still all his prophecy is directed against the idolatry of the Kingdom of Israel; by various more definite allusions scholars seem more satisfied in giving him a definite date. He prophesies in the reign of Jeroboam II, 823-782 B.C., in the time of Israel's prosperity, but also in the time of

Israel's greatest wickedness; both alike are clearly reflected in his work.

The Book of Amos begins with a denunciation of surrounding nations, and an assurance of their doom. But in their wake will follow the doom of Israel; Israel has deserved it, and it must come. Then come three addresses, each with the same formal opening; the punishment of Israel is certain, it is unavoidable, when it comes it will be terrible indeed. Five visions are then given: three of warning, under the form of locusts, of fire, and of the mason's trowel in the hand of God; two others, one of the hook that drags down the fruit from the tree, the other of the Lord himself, threatening destruction, yet also promising pardon.

Amos was a herdsman, and his language is full of the imagination of the fields. His illustrations come from the herdsman's life, he knows what it is to have encountered wild beasts; on the other hand, he shows wide knowledge, and experience, and education, such as one would not expect in a prophet who was a mere countryman and no more.

## Osee

In the non-Catholic Bible Hosea never mentions Jerusalem or the Temple, and therefore seems to belong to the Northern Kingdom of Israel. He contains allusions which make one suppose that he lived to see the destruction of Samaria by the Assyrians 722 B.C. This is almost all we can say of him historically.

Accepting this, then we may interpret the prophecy thus. Israel, by breaking off from Juda, and forming a kingdom apart, has practically apostatised. This is confirmed by the fact that the worship of calves, and of Baal, has been introduced among the people, and with them all manner of vices and iniquities. Still God is faithful to them, even though they have not been faithful to him; the day will come when he will draw them again to

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himself, though the punishment they deserve, and must needs receive, is even now hanging over them.

As a writer Osee stands high among the prophets. He is a poet of great pathos and tenderness, full of simile and colour, and of play upon words; his proverbial phrases are much quoted, especially in the New Testament.

## Joel

As Osee makes no mention of Jerusalem, and so is judged to belong to the Kingdom of Israel, so Joel never mentions the northern tribes, and so is ascribed to the Kingdom of Juda. His prophecy takes the form of the description of an invasion of locusts, with its effects; on the repentance of the people those effects will be repaired; indeed, when the Messias shall come, and when men call upon his name, the Spirit of the Lord will be poured out upon all.

To us the prophet Joel is particularly memorable, because it is he who makes so much of the General Judgement, and who speaks of it as to take place in the valley of Jehosaphat.

## Nahum

The name of this prophet means "The Comforter," and such he may well have been to the people of Israel in their exile. His prophecy has but one burthen, the doom of Ninive which holds the Chosen People in thrall. In a vivid introduction he speaks of the might, and the justice, and the invincibility of God; at once he denounces the proud ones of the earth, who shall be crushed to pieces by this almighty power; then, like a quiet evening sunset after a day of storm, comes the well-known text: "Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace."

The rest of the prophecy is a wonderful piece of

imagery; of the army of the Lord, and of Ninive that crumbles beneath its onset. There are few passages in the Old Testament so vivid. The date of this prophet is sufficiently clear; he must have prophesied during the period of the Babylonian Captivity.

### Habacuc

The Prophecy of Habacuc is made up of two parts. In the first the prophet argues with God, even as we are often tempted to argue. This is a wicked world; why does wickedness seem always triumphant? And God answers him: Wickedness may triumph for a time; but in the end it will perish. Even at the moment at which the prophet speaks, punishment is being prepared for the wickedness around him; God is preparing the Chaldæans to be the scourge of his own people. But this does not quite satisfy the prophet. The eyes of God see all evil and all good, and these Chaldæans are even worse than the Jews; how, then, can he permit the Chaldæans to conquer, for this would seem to make matters even worse than they were before?

The answer is given at once: Let man only trust and wait; there will come a Redeemer. Then the prophecy concludes, describing the punishment of the wicked, and encouraging the just to live in hope.

For the date of this prophecy we can rely very much on the allusion to the Chaldæans. To the prophet himself, and to the people to whom he spoke, they were a distant people, not yet the conquerors they later became. Hence we may argue that the prophecy is dated not earlier than 750 B.C., when the Chaldæans first came on the political horizon, nor later than 625 B.C., when they had founded the New Babylonian Empire. From other evidence it is perhaps best placed about 650 B.C.

## Sophonias

The prophet Sophonias was also a contemporary of Jeremias. There is something very remarkable about this prophet's outlook; he might almost be called the prophet of the human race. He speaks in no doubtful terms of the judgement that awaits all men. Israel shall be judged in a special way as the chosen race, specially favoured; all nations shall be judged, because to them, too, has been given the stewardship of the things of this world; all together, for their idolatry, for their inordinate seeking after riches, shall be brought to judgement on "the Day of the Lord." And yet it is not for condemnation that they shall be judged; it is that the evil may be cast out, and the good be preserved, and the whole of mankind may be saved.

Thus the prophecy runs very much along the same lines as the others, and yet with a marked difference. It is true, he seems to say, that the Chosen People are the special object of God's interest and care; that upon them in a particular way his threats and promises are fulfilled; nevertheless the same care and interest extend to all the nations. Again, it is to be noticed in this prophet that he makes no special allusion, as do the others, to any particular kingdom that is to come down upon the peoples and punish them; he seems to imply that evil-doing will in the end bring about its own downfall. Hence it is not of much use to try to identify the particular events to which he may be supposed to refer. The prophet seems scarcely to trouble about such details, unlike Isaias or Jeremias; he is wholly engaged with the general law by which the wickedness of man is judged.

The allusions made to contemporary events leave little doubt as to the date of this prophet. At the same time his work is full of other problems, no less than is the work of every other prophet. Still he does but

emphasise the more the fact that these things, which count so much with modern critics, mattered very little to the Jews of old. "The letter killeth, the spirit quickeneth"; the Jews cared only for the spirit of their prophets which lived on, not for the dates when they lived and died, not even much for their very names. In them God spoke, and it was enough.

## Micheas

As we have seen, the prophet Micheas is the only one upon our list represented as teaching in both the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Juda. He was a severe prophet; he was severe in his threats of punishment; still there is none so full of the promise of redemption. Punishment must come, he cries out; because the people are what they are it cannot be averted; and then, as if the people were before the judgement seat of God, God justifies himself for all that he is about to inflict upon them. In return the people seem to accept their sentence; God is just, but he is also merciful, and when the punishment is done, and justice is satisfied, then will come forgiveness and redemption.

Once more we can only conjecture the date of the prophecy; the usual internal evidence, the allusions to contemporary events and the picture of the times, are valuable chiefly to the student of imagination. One good clue we have: the prophet's writings seem to have been known to, and quoted by, Isaias; therefore we may argue that Micheas was the elder of the two.

In many ways the style of Micheas seems to be more quiet, less rugged and vehement, less lit up with fire and imagery, than that of the other prophets whom we have already considered. On the other hand, there is something almost modern in his outlook; he seems to see beyond the ordinary prophet's horizon, into the realm of restoration and hope; no one makes more of the Messias,

who is to come from Bethlehem, who is to be the Peace of the world, and who is to refound the new Jerusalem. In the same spirit he sees through the meaning of sacrifice, dwelling more on the value of a good life than on the offering of victims.

### Aggeus

In the last three prophets we have men of a distinctly later generation. The nation has long lain in captivity in Babylon; in their weariness there is danger of the people forgetting their great destiny; what hopes they had have been dashed to the ground by the revoking of the edict that allowed the Temple to be rebuilt. Suddenly, in the midst of this depression, two prophets come forward to rouse the captive Jews from their lethargy, to point out to them that though the day of deliverance is delayed yet will it certainly come, that God is faithful, that his mercy is infallible, that he has promised and will fulfil.

The first of these is Aggeus. He addresses Zorobabel and Jesus, the one representing the house of David, the other the priesthood of Levi. Through them he blames the people for their despondency and neglect. Under his inspiration they rouse themselves, and even as they work he encourages them with further prophecy. It is true the Temple they are building is a poor thing in comparison with Solomon's grand temple which it replaces. Nevertheless its glory shall be greater; for one day " the Desired of all nations " shall sanctify it with his actual presence. It is true, too, the people themselves are stained; yet the day will come when this new generation shall be gloriously blessed. The Book of Aggeus concludes with a special blessing for the Governor Zorobabel himself.

There is no possibility of mistaking the date of Aggeus. Even his four distinct prophecies are dated in the book; it would seem that their date had some significance in the mind of the Jews. The Messianic spirit of the

language is again unmistakable; Aggeus looks clearly forward to the coming of Christ to crown the efforts of his people.

### Zacharias

The other prophet raised up at this time to rouse the despondent people was Zacharias. His name means "The Lord remembers," a fitting name indeed; there is abundant evidence to show that he was also a priest. Whether he was also the prophet Zacharias "slain between the temple and the altar," alluded to later by our Lord, is more than doubtful.

Throughout his prophecies Zacharias has clearly one thing mainly in mind. Aggeus has dwelt on the glory of the new Temple, and of the blessedness of the reawakened people; Zacharias goes further and is all intent on the future Kingdom of the Messias. He begins with seven very striking visions, and interprets each as it occurs. In the first he shows how the nations that oppress the people shall perish, and how Jerusalem shall be restored; in the second, the same idea is repeated under further figure; in the third, as it were, the dimensions of the future city of the Messias are measured out. Then the prophet turns to the Messias himself. In the first vision he is clothed and mitred; in the second the marks of royalty are shown; in the third the evils that this new King will destroy; in the fourth the chariots of God appear which traverse the world. At the close of these visions the prophet is ordered to crown Jesus, the high priest, with a golden crown, thus foreshowing the Christ, the anointed King and Priest.

After this follows an address. The prophet is consulted concerning the laws of fasting. Far more important is it, he answers, to fast from sin and keep the commandments and he goes on to describe the joys of the new Jerusalem as an incentive to holiness of life.

Then follow two "burdens," as they are called, two

long prophecies of doom to the enemies of Israel, but of mercy to herself. In striking language she is assured that " thy King will come to thee, the just and Saviour," while a curse is pronounced upon those who have neglected the flock entrusted to their care. The song of hope alternates with the song of condemnation, until all is swallowed up in victory. It has been and still is argued that these two " burdens " are by another writer than the author of the first part of the prophecy. Whether they are or are not concerns us very little, just as it mattered to the ancient Jews not at all.

## Malachias

The last of the prophets is Malachias, or, as he should more properly be called, Malachi, " My Angel," the name given to him in the Hebrew and non-Catholic version. Probably this was not the prophet's real name; there is much evidence to show that he was Esdras, of whom we have already heard in former chapters; one version seems to assert their identity. At all events, so far as the picture of the times given by the prophet can help us, it seems certain that he belonged to the period when Esdras restored the people to Jerusalem.

The prophet begins by contrasting the happy lot of the children of Israel with the less happy fate of the children of Esau; for the Lord has loved and chosen one and has rejected the other. And yet in spite of this, he tells them, the Lord has only to complain of their treatment of him. He has been a father to them and they have been undutiful; he has chosen his priests from among them, and his priests have only contemned him. Therefore will he establish another sacrifice, and another priesthood, not from the Jews only, but to extend throughout the world:

" From the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles: and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean

oblation: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts."

After the iniquities of the priests have been lashed, the prophet turns to the people. They have allied themselves with strange women; they have made light of divorce; they have pretended to ignore the "God of judgement," there is something almost modern in his accusation. But the response to all this is wonderful. God "will send his angel, and he shall prepare the way before his face." The Messias will come, and will purify his temple and his priesthood; evil-doers shall be punished, true penitents shall be blessed. He concludes with an exhortation to observe the law; and again the people are told that "Elias the prophet" will appear "before the coming of the great day of the Lord."

So ends the majestic line of the prophets. For more than four hundred years nothing more was heard, until one day, on the banks of the Jordan, John the Baptist appeared declaring himself to be the forerunner of whom Malachi had spoken.

## VII.—THE BOOKS OF MACHABEES

### Machabees I-II

THE Old Testament, in the Catholic version, closes with two important books of history. From the restoration of Jerusalem in the fifth century B.C., down to the time of the actual coming of our Lord, these are the only internal sources from which we can learn what happened to the Jews during those four hundred years. And yet they do but cover a very limited period; the first, about forty years, the second less than twenty years, in the middle of the second century B.C.

When the small remnant had returned from Captivity, and had settled down again in the old country, it was almost inevitable that it would be very much at the mercy of the powerful and conquering nations that lived around it. It began its own government once more, not by restoring the kingship, but under the high priests of the restored Temple of Jerusalem; on this account, even in the time of Christ, when the country had been absorbed into the Roman Empire, the high priest still remained the recognised chief authority among the Jewish people. Meanwhile two great kingdoms in particular were a constant menace: the Egyptians under the Ptolemies in the south, and in the north Syria, ruled by the Seleucid kings.

In course of time these Seleucid kings became the terror of the East. In 175 B.C. Antiochus IV came to the throne; his influence as overlord of Palestine induced him at once to tamper with their faith. He brought in Greek ideals, Greek gods, Greek forms of worship; later, when he had fought, and conquered, and ravaged

his chief rival, Egypt, he returned through Palestine; in Jerusalem he publicly defiled the Temple, and began a systematic persecution of the Jews who were faithful to their traditions.

At first the Jews were paralysed, and unable to offer any resistance. But at last there arose up one Mathathias, an old man much respected, who roused his people, gathered them around him in revolt, turned against the persecuting Syrians, and beat them in open battle. Then he died; but not before he had left to his sons as their inheritance the solemn duty of leading on the Jewish people till the Syrian power was driven from the land.

These sons of Mathathias are known as the Machabees, and it is from them that the two books we are here considering are named. First arose Judas Machabeus, in many ways the greatest of them all. One after another he overthrew the generals of the Syrians that were sent against him; at last, secure in his victories, he solemnly purified the sanctuary which had been defiled, restored once more the old religion, and fortified the city of Jerusalem. Then followed more wars, not only against the Syrians, but against other surrounding pagan nations; in the end Judas Machabeus himself fell in battle.

He was succeeded by his brother Jonathan. His reign marks an advance upon that of Judas. The first brother had to fight to restore his people to some sense of independence; the second found himself powerful enough to be a valuable ally on one side or the other to surrounding nations when they were at war. Hence the different nature of his reign; it is a story of alliances, and of battles undertaken for causes not strictly vital to the Jewish people; in the end he is betrayed into the hands of an enemy and put to death.

Jonathan was succeeded by his brother Simon, whose reign was for the most part a time of peace. Simon was given the title of king as well as priest; in his period it may be said that the Jews had once more really gained

their independence. They had become sufficiently important for the distant and fast-growing Romans to write to them and call them their friends; the nations closer at hand made much account of their support. But once more treachery did its work; in the end Simon and his sons were betrayed, and the family was put to death.

All this is contained in the First Book of Machabees, the author of which seems to have in mind nothing but a faithful historical narrative. The Second Book is very different. It begins with a letter from the Jews in Palestine to the Jews in Egypt, urging on them due devotion to their festivals. Then follows a second letter, also from Palestine to Egypt, giving an account of what had recently happened under Judas Machabeus: the death of the Syrian King, the purification of the Temple, the revival of the Feast of Tabernacles, and other things connected with the honour of the Temple.

These two introductions give the key to the whole of the Second Book. Unlike the first, it is obviously not intent on relating the history of a period; it has rather in mind the glory of the Temple. In matter it covers only the period of Judas, the first of the three Machabees already mentioned; all the time the author has his mind on the Temple and its priests, on those who did them honour and those who injured them; and stories are told of divine intervention to save the sanctuary and its servants. Thus from time to time this Book crosses the path of the other; but much more often its matter is its own, its stories are unique, its point of view is so distinct that were it not for the names and a few guiding details one might think it related to an altogether different period.

The date when these two books were written must have been considerably later than the events which they relate. The First Book closes with the death of Simon Machabeus in 143 B.C.; the author has clearly at his service many authentic documents, for he constantly refers to

them in his narrative, much as a modern historian would put footnotes at the bottom of a page. On the other hand, he speaks of the Romans as a friendly and distant people, of whom he has nothing to fear; yet by the year 70 B.C. the Romans had become a terror to the East, and in 64 B.C. they actually conquered Jerusalem. Hence it seems safe to conclude that this First Book was written somewhere between 100 and 64 B.C. The original was in Hebrew; of that, too, we are tolerably certain.

The Second Book must have been much later. The author declares it to be nothing more than a synopsis of five other books written by a previous writer called Jason; and he must have composed his work considerably after the end of the Machabean house, and the succession of the Asmoneans—that is, of the house from which subsequently came the famous Herods. If we allow sufficient intervals, first for Jason's work, and then for the work of the Epitomist, we shall be driven to a date not very much before the birth of our Lord himself. This Second Book was written in Greek.

Their recent date will alone suffice to explain why these two books were not included in the Hebrew Bible; to the Jews the Canon of Scripture was considered closed long before they were written. On this account they were not translated by St Jerome; the version we possess was made before his time. Hence the Protestant Bible does not admit Machabees I and II. For our acceptance of them we rely on tradition and the authority of the Church.

One point of special interest to students of the Bible lies in the fact that these two books give us the most authentic idea of the Jewish mind in the two centuries preceding the coming of our Lord. They tell us clearly of the devotion of the Jews to all their ancient traditions; the law is ever before them, the Temple is the one thing sacred; so long as it is safe all other things seem secondary. They prepare for the fight by prayer and fasting, trusting

in these as much as in arms; and though it is remarkable how the name of God is scarcely mentioned, yet it is evident that trust in Providence is of the very essence of the thought of both authors. When they go to war, it is not only against the enemies of their country that they fight; they are stirred by the iniquities they have spread over the land, and this more than anything else spurs them to victory. When they win success, again it is in the old spirit that they act; there are public thanksgivings, festivals established, they "ordained that these days should be kept every year with gladness."

But there are also certain developments. In the Second Book in particular, where the religious tone is more conspicuous, we see, as it were, links between the old and the new. More things are wrought by prayer than before; angels from heaven fight on the side of the righteous; martyrdom is described as a glorious thing; while the wicked come to a miserable end, especially those who persecute the good. Once more prayer gives strength to their arms; when the fight is over, and the dead are collected, prayer is offered for their souls: "For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead."

So closes the Old Testament, as a Catholic accepts it. As the books are described apart from one another they seem distinct enough; yet when they are studied, when they are read with sympathy, there is a sameness in spirit which justifies the name of "the Bible," "the Book." And the sameness is produced by the one thread that runs through them all, binding all together into one. It is the ever-growing, yet ever-consistent revelation of God to man, the gradual opening of the mind of man to God; God pointing ever to the future, man looking to the future for the great fulfilment. Apart from separate prophecies, the whole Bible is itself a prophecy of him who was to make all things new.

# PART II.—SELECTIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

## Preliminary Note

THIS "group of selections" is intended, in the first place, for young people, that they may become early familiar with the language and substance of some of the most beautiful passages in the Old Testament. It is intended secondly for such as are accustomed to read some short passage of spiritual matter every day, that they may have at hand a few of the choicest selections from Scripture. Thirdly, it is intended for religious and others who have the practice of daily meditation, that they may if they so choose make their daily prayer upon the Word of God. And fourthly, it is intended for those who wish to know something of the spirit of the Bible, but who have not the inclination to face the reading of the whole.

The principle of selection has been very simple, though the selection itself has not always been easy. In the first place, since he wished that the passages should be such as could be easily committed to memory, and moreover should cover the whole of the Old Testament, the compiler rigidly confined himself to a certain length, beyond which he would not permit himself to go. This excluded at once the usual familiar narrative; it also made it necessary in many places to cut down the passages selected. The Bible was then gone through carefully, and a choice was made of such places as seemed most to bring out the character of the author, to be in themselves the most beautiful, and to be most likely to appeal to an ordinary modern reader, who is not supposed to be deeply versed in Scripture study.

# I.—SELECTIONS FROM THE PENTATEUCH

## FROM THE BOOK OF GENESIS

### I.—The Creation of Man (*Genesis* i 26-31)

And God said: Let us make man to our image and likeness: and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth. And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them. And God blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth. And God said: Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed upon the earth, and all trees that have in themselves seed of their own kind, to be your meat: And to all beasts of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to all that move upon the earth, and wherein there is life, that they may have to feed upon. And it was so done. And God saw all the things that he had made, and they were very good. And the evening and morning were the sixth day.

### II.—The Call of Abram (*Genesis* xii 1-7)

And the Lord said to Abram: Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and out of thy father's house, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and magnify thy name, and thou shalt be blessed. I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee, and IN THEE shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed: So Abram went out as the Lord had commanded him, and Lot went with him : Abram was seventy-five years old when he went forth from Haran. And he took

Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all the substance which they had gathered, and the souls which they had gotten in Haran; and they went out to go into the land of Chanaan. And when they were come into it, Abram passed through the country into the place of Sichem, as far as the noble vale: now the Chanaanite was at that time in the land. And the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him: To thy seed will I give this land. And he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

### III.—The Trial of Abraham (*Genesis* xxii 1-14)

After these things, God tempted Abraham, and said to him: Abraham, Abraham. And he answered: Here I am. He said to him: Take thy only begotten son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and go into the land of vision: and there thou shalt offer him for an holocaust upon one of the mountains which I will shew thee. So Abraham rising up in the night, saddled his ass: and took with him two young men, and Isaac his son: and when he had cut wood for the holocaust, he went his way to the place which God had commanded him. And on the third day, lifting up his eyes, he saw the place afar off. And he said to his young men: Stay you here with the ass: I and the boy will go with speed as far as yonder, and after we have worshipped, will return to you. And he took the wood for the holocaust, and laid it upon Isaac his son: and he himself carried in his hands fire and a sword. And as they two went on together, Isaac said to his father: My father. And he answered: What wilt thou, son? Behold, saith he, fire and wood: where is the victim for the holocaust? And Abraham said: God will provide himself a victim for an holocaust, my son. So they went on together. And they came to the place which God had shewn him, where he built an altar, and laid the wood in order upon it; and when he had bound Isaac his son, he

laid him on the altar upon the pile of wood. And he put forth his hand, and took the sword, to sacrifice his son. And behold an Angel of the Lord from heaven called to him, saying: Abraham, Abraham. And he answered: Here I am. And he said to him: Lay not thy hand upon the boy, neither do thou any thing to him: now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not spared thy only begotten son for my sake. Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw behind his back a ram amongst the briers sticking fast by the horns, which he took and offered for an holocaust instead of his son. And he called the name of that place, The Lord seeth. Whereupon even to this day it is said: In the mountain the Lord will see.

## IV.—The Vision of Jacob (*Genesis* xxviii 10-18)

But Jacob, being departed from Bersabee, went on to Haran. And when he was come to a certain place, and would rest in it after sunset, he took of the stones that lay there, and putting under his head, slept in the same place. And he saw in his sleep a ladder standing upon the earth, and the top thereof touching heaven: the angels also of God ascending and descending by it. And the Lord leaning upon the ladder, saying to him: I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: The land, wherein thou sleepest, I will give to thee and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth: thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and IN THEE and thy seed all the tribes of the earth SHALL BE BLESSED. And I will be thy keeper whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee back into this land: neither will I leave thee, till I shall have accomplished all that I have said. And when Jacob awaked out of sleep, he said: Indeed the Lord is in this place, and I knew *it* not. And trembling he said: How terrible is this place! this is no other but the house of God, and the gate of heaven. And Jacob, arising in

the morning, took the stone, which he had laid under his head, and set it up for a title, pouring oil upon the top of it.

## V.—The Honour of Joseph (*Genesis* xli 38-45)

And Pharao said to them: Can we find such another man, that is full of the spirit of God? He said therefore to Joseph: Seeing God hath shown thee all that thou hast said, can I find one wiser and like unto thee? Thou shalt be over my house, and at the commandments of thy mouth all the people shall obey: only in the kingly throne will I be above thee. And again Pharao said to Joseph: Behold, I have appointed thee over the whole land of Egypt. And he took his ring from his own hand, and gave it into his hand: and he put upon him a robe of silk, and put a chain of gold about his neck. And he made him go up into the second chariot, the crier proclaiming that all should bow their knee before him, and that they should know he was made governor over the whole land of Egypt. And the king said to Joseph: I am Pharao; without thy commandment no man shall move hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. And he turned his name, and called him in the Egyptian tongue the saviour of the world. And he gave him to wife Aseneth, the daughter of Putiphare, priest of Heliopolis. Then Joseph went out to the land of Egypt.

## VI.—The Meeting of the Brethren (*Genesis* xlv 1-8)

Joseph could no longer refrain himself before many that stood by: whereupon he commanded that all should go out, and no stranger be present at their knowing one another. And he lifted up his voice with weeping, which the Egyptians and all the house of Pharao heard. And he said to his brethren: I am Joseph: is my father yet living? His brethren could not answer him, being struck

with exceeding great fear. And he said mildly to them: Come nearer to me. And when they were come near him, he said: I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. Be not afraid, and let it not seem to you a hard case that you sold me into these countries: for God sent me before you into Egypt for your preservation. For it is two years since the famine began to be upon the land, and five years more remain, wherein there can be neither ploughing nor reaping. And God sent me before, that you may be preserved upon the earth, and may have food to live. Not by your counsel was I sent hither, but by the will of God: who hath made me as it were a father to Pharao, and lord of his whole house, and governor in all the land of Egypt.

## FROM THE BOOK OF EXODUS

### VII.—The Call of Moses (*Exodus* iv 10-16)

Moses said: I beseech thee, Lord, I am not eloquent from yesterday and the day before: and since thou hast spoken to thy servant, I have more impediment and slowness of tongue. The Lord said to him: Who made man's mouth ? or who made the dumb and the deaf, the seeing and the blind ? did not I ? Go therefore, and I will be in thy mouth; and I will teach thee what thou shalt speak. But he said: I beseech thee, Lord, send whom thou wilt send. The Lord being angry at Moses, said: Aaron the Levite is thy brother: I know that he is eloquent: behold, he cometh forth to meet thee, and seeing thee shall be glad at heart. Speak to him, and put my words in his mouth: and I will be in thy mouth, and in his mouth, and will show you what you must do. He shall speak in thy stead to the people, and shall be thy mouth: but thou shalt be to him in those things that pertain to God.

## VIII.—The Promise to Moses (*Exodus* vi 2-8)

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: I am the Lord that appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, by the name of God Almighty: and my name *Adonai* I did not show them. And I made a covenant with them, to give them the land of Chanaan, the land of their pilgrimage wherein they were strangers. I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel, wherewith the Egyptians have oppressed them: and I have remembered my covenant. Therefore say to the children of Israel: I *am* the Lord who will bring you out from the work-prison of the Egyptians, and will deliver you from bondage: and redeem you with a high arm, and great judgements. And I will take you to myself for my people: I will be your God: and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from the work-prison of the Egyptians: and brought you into the land, concerning which I lifted up my hand to give it to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: and I will give it you to possess: I *am* the Lord.

## IX.—The Manna in the Desert (*Exodus* xvi 2-15)

And all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the children of Israel said to them: Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat over the flesh-pots, and ate bread to the full: why have you brought us into this desert, that you might destroy all the multitude with famine? And the Lord said to Moses: Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you: let the people go forth, and gather what is sufficient for every day; that I may prove them whether they will walk in my law, or no. But the sixth day let them provide for to bring in: and let it be double to that they

were wont to gather every day. And Moses and Aaron said to the children of Israel: In the evening you shall know that the Lord hath brought you forth out of the land of Egypt: And in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord: for he hath heard your murmuring against the Lord: but as for us, what are we, that you mutter against us? And Moses said: In the evening the Lord will give you flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full: for he hath heard your murmurings, with which you have murmured against him: for what are we? your murmuring is not against us, but against the Lord. Moses also said to Aaron: Say to the whole congregation of the children of Israel: Come before the Lord: for he hath heard your murmuring. And when Aaron spoke to all the assembly of the children of Israel, they looked towards the wilderness: and behold the glory of the Lord appeared in a cloud. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: I have heard the murmuring of the children of Israel: say to them: In the evening you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread: and you shall know that I am the Lord your God. So it came to pass in the evening, that quails coming up, covered the camp: and in the morning a dew lay round about the camp. And when it had covered the face of the earth, it appeared in the wilderness small, and as it were beaten with a pestle, like unto the hoar-frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another: Manhu? which signifieth: What is this? for they knew not what it was. And Moses said to them: This is the bread, which the Lord hath given you to eat.

## X.—Moses with God (*Exodus* xxxiii 11-23)

And the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man is wont to speak to his friend. And when he returned into the camp, his servant Josue the son of Nun, a young

man, departed not from the tabernacle. And Moses said to the Lord: Thou commandest me to lead forth this people: and thou dost not let me know whom thou wilt send with me, especially whereas thou hast said: I know thee by name, and thou hast found favour in my sight. If therefore I have found favour in thy sight, shew me thy face, that I may know thee and may find grace before thy eyes: look upon thy people this nation. And the Lord said: My face shall go before thee, and I will give thee rest. And Moses said: If thou thyself dost not go before, bring us not out of this place. For how shall we be able to know, I and thy people, that we have found grace in thy sight, unless thou walk with us, that we may be glorified by all people that dwell upon the earth? And the Lord said to Moses: This word also which thou hast spoken will I do: for thou hast found grace before me, and thee I have known by name. And he said: Shew me thy glory. He answered: I will shew thee all good, and I will proclaim in the name of the Lord before thee: and I will have mercy on whom I will, and I will be merciful to whom it shall please me. And again he said: Thou canst not see my face: for man shall not see me and live. And again he said: Behold, there is a place with me, and thou shalt stand upon the rock. And when my glory shall pass, I will set thee in a hole of the rock, and protect thee with my right hand till I pass: And I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face thou canst not see.

## XI. Moses with God (*Exodus* xxxiv 5-10)

And when the Lord was come down in a cloud, Moses stood with him, calling upon the name of the Lord. And when he passed before him, he said: O the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, patient and of much compassion, and true: who keepest mercy unto thousands: who takest away iniquity, and wickedness,

and sin, and no man of himself is innocent before thee. Who renderest the iniquity of the fathers to the children, and to the grandchildren unto the third and fourth generation. And Moses making haste, bowed down prostrate unto the earth, and adoring, said: If I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, I beseech thee that thou wilt go with us (for it is a stiff-necked people), and take away our iniquities and sin, and possess us. The Lord answered: I will make a covenant in the sight of all: I will do signs such as were never seen upon the earth, nor in any nations; that this people, in the midst of whom thou art, may see the terrible work of the Lord which I will do.

## XII.—The Glory of the Tabernacle (*Exodus* xl 29-36)

And Moses, and Aaron, and his sons washed their hands and feet, when they went into the tabernacle of the covenant, and went to the altar, as the Lord had commanded Moses. He set up also the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, drawing the hanging in the entry thereof. After all things were perfected, the cloud covered the tabernacle of the testimony: and the glory of the Lord filled it. Neither could Moses go into the tabernacle of the covenant, the cloud covering all things, and the majesty of the Lord shining; for the cloud had covered all. If at any time the cloud removed from the tabernacle, the children of Israel went forward by their troops: if it hung over, they remained in the same place. For the cloud of the Lord hung over the tabernacle by day, and a fire by night, in the sight of all the children of Israel throughout all their mansions.

## FROM THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

### XIII.—The Unfaithful Sons of Aaron (*Leviticus* x 1-7)

And Nadab and Abiu, the sons of Aaron, taking *their* censers, put fire therein, and incense on it, offering before the Lord strange fire; which was not commanded them. And fire coming out from the Lord destroyed them; and they died before the Lord. And Moses said to Aaron: This is what the Lord hath spoken: I will be sanctified in them that approach to me; and I will be glorified in the sight of all the people. And when Aaron heard this, he held his peace. And Moses called Misael and Elisaphan, the sons of Oziel, the uncle of Aaron, and said to them: Go, and take away your brethren from before the sanctuary, and carry them without the camp. And they went forthwith, and took them as they lay, vested with linen tunics, and cast them forth, as had been commanded them. And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons: Uncover not your heads, and rend not your garments, lest perhaps you die, and indignation come upon all the congregation. Let your brethren, and all the house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord has kindled. But you shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle: otherwise you shall perish: for the oil of the holy unction is on you. And they did all things according to the precept of Moses.

### XIV.—The Blasphemer (*Leviticus* xxiv 10-23)

And behold there went out the son of a woman of Israel, whom she had of an Egyptian, among the children of Israel, and fell at words in the camp, with a man of Israel. And when he had blasphemed the Name, and had cursed it, he was brought to Moses: (now his mother

was called Salumith, the daughter of Dabri, of the tribe of Dan). And they put him into prison, till they might know what the Lord would command. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Bring forth the blasphemer without the camp; and let them that heard him put their hands upon his head; and let all the people stone him. And thou shalt speak to the children of Israel. The man that curseth his God shall bear his sin: and he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, dying let him die: all the multitude shall stone him, whether he be a native or a stranger. He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, dying let him die: he that striketh, and killeth a man, dying let him die. He that killeth a beast shall make it good, that is to say, shall give beast for beast. He that giveth a blemish to any of his neighbours, as he hath done so shall it be done to him: breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth shall he restore. What blemish he gave the like shall he be compelled to suffer. He that striketh a beast shall render another. He that striketh a man shall be punished. Let there be equal judgement among you, whether he be a stranger or a native that offends: because I am the Lord your God. And Moses spoke to the children of Israel: and they brought forth him that had blasphemed, without the camp, and they stoned him. And the children of Israel did as the Lord had commanded Moses.

## FROM THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

### XV.—The Blessing (*Numbers* vi 22-27)

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Say to Aaron and his sons: Thus shall you bless the children of Israel, and you shall say to them: The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord shew his face to thee, and have mercy on thee. The Lord turn his countenance to thee, and give thee peace. And they shall invoke my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them.

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## XVI.—The Prayer of Moses (*Numbers* xiv 11-21)

And the Lord said to Moses: How long will this people detract me? How long will they not believe me for all the signs that I have wrought before them? I will strike them therefore with pestilence, and will consume them: but thee I will make a ruler over a great nation, and a mightier than this is. And Moses said to the Lord: That the Egyptians, from the midst of whom thou hast brought forth this people, and the inhabitants of this land (who have heard that thou, O Lord, art among his people, and are seen face to face, and thy cloud protecteth them, and thou goest before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night), may hear that thou hast killed so great a multitude as it were one man, and may say: He could not bring the people into the land for which he had sworn; therefore did he kill them in the wilderness. Let then the strength of the Lord be magnified, as thou hast sworn, saying: The Lord is patient and full of mercy, taking away iniquity and wickedness, and leaving no man clear, who visitest the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. Forgive, I beseech thee, the sins of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy, as thou hast been merciful to them from their going out of Egypt unto this place. And the Lord said: I have forgiven according to thy word. As I live: and the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.

## XVII.—The Brazen Serpent (*Numbers* xxi 4-9)

And they marched from Mount Hor, by the way that leadeth to the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom. And the people began to be weary of their journey and labour. And speaking against God and Moses, they said: Why didst thou bring us out of Egypt, to die

in the wilderness? There is no bread, nor have we any waters: our soul now loatheth this very light food. Wherefore the Lord sent among the people fiery serpents, which bit them, and killed many of them. Upon which they came to Moses, and said: We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and thee: pray that he may take away these serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to him: Make a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign: whosoever being struck shall look on it, shall live. Moses therefore made a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign: which when they that were bitten looked upon, they were healed.

## XVIII.—The Prophecy of Balaam
## (*Numbers* xxiv 15-19)

Therefore taking up his parable, again he said: Balaam the son of Beor hath said: The man whose eye is stopped up, hath said: The hearer of the words of God hath said, who knoweth the doctrine of the Highest, and seeth the visions of the Almighty, who falling hath his eyes opened: I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not near. A STAR SHALL RISE out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall spring up from Israel; and shall strike the chiefs of Moab, and shall waste all the children of Seth. And he shall possess Idumea: the inheritance of Seir shall come to their enemies: but Israel shall do manfully. Out of Jacob shall he come that shall rule, and shall destroy the remains of the city.

## XIX.—The Appointment of Josue
## (*Numbers* xxvii 12-23)

The Lord also said to Moses: Go up into this mountain Abarim, and view from thence the land which I will give to the children of Israel. And when thou shalt have seen it, thou also shalt go to thy people, as thy brother

Aaron is gone. Because you offended me in the desert of Sin in the contradiction of the multitude, neither would you sanctify me before them at the waters. These are the waters of contradiction in Cades of the desert of Sin. And Moses answered him: May the Lord the God of the spirits of all flesh provide a man, that may be over this multitude: and may go out and in before them, and may lead them out, or bring them in: lest the people of the Lord be as sheep without a shepherd. And the Lord said to him: Take Josue the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and put thy hand upon him. And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest and all the multitude: and thou shalt give him precepts in the sight of all, and part of thy glory, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may hear him. If any thing be to be done, Eleazar the priest shall consult the Lord for him. He and all the children of Israel with him, and the rest of the multitude shall go out and go in at his word. Moses did as the Lord had commanded. And when he had taken Josue, he set him before Eleazar the priest, and all the assembly of the people, and laying his hands on his head, he repeated all things that the Lord had commanded.

## FROM THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

### XX.—The Last Address (1) (*Deuteronomy* vi 4-13)

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart: And thou shalt tell them to thy children: and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping, and rising. And thou shalt bind them as a sign on thy hand: and they shall be and shall move between thy eyes. And thou shalt write them in the entry, and on the doors of thy house.

And when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land, for which he swore to thy fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: and shall have given thee great and goodly cities, which thou didst not build, houses full of riches, which thou didst not set up, cisterns which thou didst not dig, vineyards and oliveyards which thou didst not plant, and thou shalt have eaten and be full: take heed diligently lest thou forget the Lord, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt serve him only; and thou shalt swear by his name.

## XXI.—The Last Address (2) (*Deuteronomy* x 12-21)

And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but that thou fear the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways, and love him, and serve the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul: and keep the commandments of the Lord, and his ceremonies, which I command thee this day, that it may be well with thee? Behold, heaven is the Lord's thy God, and the heaven of heaven, the earth and all things that are therein. And yet the Lord hath been closely joined to thy fathers, and loved them, and chose their seed after them, that is to say, you, out of all nations, as this day it is proved. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and stiffen your neck no more. Because the Lord your God he is the God of gods, and the Lord of lords, a great God and mighty, and terrible, who accepteth no person nor taketh bribes. He doeth judgement to the fatherless and the widow, loveth the stranger, and giveth him food and raiment. And do you therefore love strangers; because you also were strangers in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him only: to him thou shalt adhere, and shalt swear by his name. He is thy praise, and thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thy eyes have seen.

## XXII.—The Last Address (3) (*Deuteronomy* xviii 13-18)

Thou shalt be perfect, and without spot before the Lord thy God. These nations, whose land thou shalt possess, hearken to soothsayers and diviners: but thou art otherwise instructed by the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God will raise up to thee a PROPHET of thy nation and of thy brethren like unto me: him thou shalt hear. As thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the assembly was gathered together, and saidst: Let me not hear any more the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see any more this exceeding great fire, lest I die. And the Lord said to me: They have spoken of all things well. I will raise them up a prophet out of the midst of their brethren like to thee: and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak all that I shall command him.

## XXIII.—The Last Address (4) (*Deuteronomy* xxx 11-20)

This commandment, that I command thee this day, is not above thee nor far off from thee. Nor is it in heaven, that thou shouldst say: Which of us can go up to heaven to bring it unto us, and we may hear and fulfil it in work? Nor is it beyond the sea; that thou mayest excuse thyself, and say: Which of us can cross the sea, and bring it unto us, that we may hear, and do that which is commanded? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. Consider that I have set before thee this day life and good, and on the other hand death and evil. That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and walk in his ways, and keep his commandments and ceremonies and judgements; and thou mayest live, and he may multiply thee, and bless thee in the land, which thou shalt go in to possess. But if thy heart be turned away, so that thou wilt not hear, and being deceived

with error thou adore strange gods, and serve them: I foretell thee this day that thou shalt perish, and shalt remain but a short time in the land, to which thou shalt pass over the Jordan, and shalt go in to possess it. I call heaven and earth to witness this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Choose therefore life, that both thou and thy seed may live. And that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and obey his voice, and adhere to him (for he is thy life, and the length of thy days), that thou mayest dwell in the land, for which the Lord swore to thy fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give it to them.

## II.—SELECTIONS FROM THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

### FROM THE BOOK OF JOSUE

### XXIV.—The Commission to Josue (*Josue* i 1-9)

NOW it came to pass after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, that the Lord spoke to Josue the son of Nun, the minister of Moses, and said to him: Moses my servant is dead. Arise, and pass over this Jordan, thou and thy people with thee, into the land which I will give to the children of Israel. I will deliver to you every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, as I have said to Moses. From the desert and from Libanus unto the great river Euphrates: all the land of the Hethites unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border. No man shall be able to resist you all the days of thy life. As I have been with Moses, so will I be with thee: I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee. Take courage and be strong: for thou shalt divide by lot to this people the land, for which I swore to their fathers, that I would deliver it to them. Take courage, therefore, and be very valiant: that thou mayest observe and do all the law which Moses my servant hath commanded thee. Turn not from it to the right or to the left, that thou mayest understand all the things that thou dost. Let not the book of this law depart from thy mouth: but thou shalt meditate on it day and night, that thou mayest observe and do all things that are written in it. Then shalt thou direct thy way and understand it. Behold I command thee, take courage and be strong. Fear not and be not dismayed: because the Lord thy God is with thee in all things whatsoever thou shalt go to.

### XXV.—Josue's Last Words (*Josue* xxiv 14-25)

Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him with a perfect and most sincere heart. And put away the gods which your fathers served in Mesopotamia and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, you have your choice: choose this day that which pleaseth you, whom you would rather serve, whether the gods which your fathers served in Mesopotamia, or the gods of the Amorrhites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord. And the people said: God forbid we should leave the Lord and serve strange gods. The Lord our God he brought us and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: and did very great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way by which we journeyed, and among all the people through whom we passed. And he hath cast out the Amorrhite, the inhabitant of the land into which we are come. Therefore we will serve the Lord, for he is our God. And Josue said to the people: You will not be able to serve the Lord. For he is a holy God, and mighty and jealous, and will not forgive your wickedness and sins. If you leave the Lord, and serve strange gods, he will afflict you, and will destroy you after all the good he has done you. And the people said to Josue: No. It shall not be as thou sayest, but we will serve the Lord. And Josue said to the people: You are witnesses, that you yourselves have chosen you the Lord to serve him. And they answered: We are witnesses.

## FROM THE BOOK OF JUDGES

### XXVI.—The Fleece of Gedeon (*Judges* vi 33-40)

Now all Madian, and Amalec, and the eastern people were gathered together; and passing over the Jordan, camped in the valley of Jezrael. But the spirit of the

Lord came upon Gedeon: and he sounded the trumpet and called together the house of Abiezer to follow him. And he sent messengers into all Manasses, and they also followed him: and other messengers into Aser and Zabulon and Nephtali, and they came to meet him. And Gedeon said to God: If thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast said, I will put this fleece of wool upon the floor. If there be dew on the fleece only, and it be dry on all the ground beside, I shall know that by my hand, as thou hast said, thou wilt deliver Israel. And it was so. And rising before day, wringing the fleece, he filled a vessel with the dew. And he said again to God: Let not thy wrath be kindled against me if I try once more, seeking a sign in the fleece. I pray that the fleece only may be dry, and all the ground wet with dew. And God did that night as he had requested. And it was dry on the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

## XXVII.—The Death of Samson (*Judges* xvi 23-30)

And the princes of the Philistines assembled together, to offer great sacrifices to Dagon their god, and to make merry, saying: Our god hath delivered our enemy, Samson, into our hands. And the people also seeing this praised their god, and said the same: Our god hath delivered our adversary into our hands, him that destroyed our country and killed very many. And rejoicing in their feasts, when they had now taken good cheer, they commanded that Samson should be called and should play before them. And being brought out of prison he played before them, and they made him stand between two pillars. And he said to the lad that guided his steps: Suffer me to touch the pillars which support the whole house; and let me lean upon them, and rest a little. Now the house was full of men and women, and all the princes of the Philistines were there. Moreover about three

thousand persons of both sexes from the roof and the higher part of the house, were beholding Samson's play. But he called upon the Lord, saying: O Lord God, remember me, and restore to me now my former strength, O my God, that I may revenge myself on my enemies, and for the loss of my two eyes I may take one revenge. And laying hold on both the pillars on which the house rested, and holding the one with his right hand, and the other with his left, he said: Let me die with the Philistines. And when he had strongly shook the pillars, the house fell upon all the princes, and the rest of the multitude that was there. And he killed many more at his death than he had killed before in his life.

## FROM THE BOOKS OF KINGS

### XXVIII.—The Call of Samuel (1 *Kings* iii 3-11)

Before the lamp of God went out, Samuel slept in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. And the Lord called Samuel. And he answered: Here am I. And he ran to Heli and said: Here am I, for thou didst call me. He said: I did not call. Go back and sleep. And he went and slept: And the Lord called Samuel again. And Samuel arose and went to Heli, and said: Here am I, for thou didst call me. He answered: I did not call thee, my son. Return and sleep. Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord; neither had the word of the Lord been revealed to him. And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose up and went to Heli. And said: Here am I, for thou didst call me. Then Heli understood that the Lord called the child, and he said to Samuel: Go and sleep. And if he shall call thee any more, thou shalt say: Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and slept in his place. And the Lord came and stood. And he called, as he had called

the other times: Samuel, Samuel. And Samuel said: Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. And the Lord said to Samuel: Behold I do a thing in Israel: and whosoever shall hear it, both his ears shall tingle.

## XXIX.—The Anointing of Saul
## (1 *Kings* ix 24 to x 1)

And Saul ate with Samuel that day. And they went down from the high place into the town. And he spoke with Saul upon the top of the house: and he prepared a bed for Saul on the top of the house: and he slept. And when they were risen in the morning, and it began now to be light, Samuel called Saul on the top of the house, saying: Arise, that I may let thee go. And Saul arose. And they went out, both of them: to wit, he and Samuel. And as they were going down in the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul: Speak to the servant to go before us, and pass on. But stand thou still a while, that I may tell thee the word of the Lord. And Samuel took a little vial of oil, and poured it upon his head: and kissed him: and said: Behold, the Lord hath anointed thee to be prince over his inheritance: and thou shalt deliver his people out of the hands of their enemies, that are round about them.

## XXX.—Jonathan and David
## (1 *Kings* xvii 57 to xviii 5)

And when David returned after the Philistine was slain, Abner took him and brought him in before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him: Young man, of what family art thou? And David said: I am the son of thy servant Isai the Bethlehemite. And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

And Saul took him that day, and would not let him return to his father's house. And David and Jonathan made a covenant: for he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the coat with which he was clothed, and gave it to David, and the rest of his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle. And David went out to whatsoever business Saul sent him, and he behaved himself prudently. And Saul set him over the soldiers, and he was acceptable in the eyes of all the people, and especially in the eyes of Saul's servants.

## XXXI.—The Danger of David (1 *Kings* xix 1-10)

And Saul spoke to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David. But Jonathan the son of Saul loved David exceedingly. And Jonathan told David, saying: Saul my father seeketh to kill thee. Wherefore look to thyself, I beseech thee, in the morning, and thou shalt abide in a secret place and shalt be hid. And I will go out and stand before my father in the field where thou art. And I will speak of thee to my father, and whatsoever I shall see, I will tell thee. And Jonathan spoke good things of David to Saul his father; and said to him: Sin not, O king, against thy servant, David, because he hath not sinned against thee; and his works are very good towards thee. And he put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine; and the Lord wrought great salvation for all Israel. Thou sawest it and didst rejoice. Why therefore wilt thou sin against innocent blood by killing David who is without fault? And when Saul heard this he was appeased with the words of Jonathan, and swore: As the Lord liveth he shall not be slain. And Jonathan called David and told him all these words. And Jonathan brought in David to Saul: and he was before him as he had been yesterday and the day before. And the war began again. And David

went out and fought the Philistines, and defeated them with a great slaughter; and they fled before his face. And the evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul: and he sat in his house and held a spear in his hand. And David played with his hand. And Saul endeavoured to nail David to the wall with his spear. And David slipped away out of the presence of Saul: and the spear missed him and was fastened in the wall. And David fled and escaped that night.

## XXXII.—David's Lament at the Death of Saul (2 *Kings* i 17-27)

And David made this kind of lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son. (Also he commanded that they should teach the children of Juda the use of the bow, as it is written in the book of the just.) And he said: Consider, O Israel, for them that are dead, wounded on thy high places. The illustrious of Israel are slain upon thy mountains: How are the valiant fallen! Tell it not in Geth, publish it not in the streets of Ascalon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gelboe, let neither dew nor rain come upon you: neither be they fields of first-fruits. For there was cast away the shield of the valiant, the shield of Saul as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the valiant, the arrow of Jonathan never turned back; and the sword of Saul did not return empty. Saul and Jonathan, lovely and comely in their life, even in death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you with scarlet in delights; who gave ornaments of gold for your attire. How are the valiant fallen in battle! Jonathan slain in the high places! I grieve for thee, my brother Jonathan: exceedingly beautiful, and amiable to me above the love of

women. As the mother loveth her only son, so did I love thee. How are the valiant fallen, and the weapons of war perished!

## XXXIII.—The Petition of Solomon (3 *Kings* iii 5-15)

And the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, saying: Ask what thou wilt that I should give thee. And Solomon said: Thou hast shown great mercy to thy servant David my father, even as he walked before thee in truth and justice, and an upright heart with thee; and thou hast kept thy great mercy for him, and hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is to this day. And now, O Lord God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father. And I am but a child, and know not how to go out and come in. And thy servant is in the midst of the people which thou hast chosen, an immense people, which cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore to thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, and discern between good and evil. For who shall be able to judge this people, thy people which is so numerous? And the word was pleasing to the Lord, that Solomon had asked such a thing. And the Lord said to Solomon: Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life or riches, nor the lives of thy enemies, but hast asked for thyself wisdom to discern judgement, behold I have done for thee according to thy words, and have given thee a wise and understanding heart: insomuch that there hath been no one like thee before thee, nor shall arise after thee. Yea and the things also which thou didst not ask I have given thee: to wit, riches and glory, so that no one hath been like thee among the kings in all days heretofore. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my precepts and my commandments, as thy father hath walked, I will lengthen thy days. And Solomon awaked, and perceived that it was a dream.

## XXXIV.—Elias and the Widow's Oil (3 *Kings* xvii 8-16)

Then the word of the Lord came to Elias, saying: Arise and go to Sarephta of the Sidonians and dwell there: for I have commanded a widow woman there to feed thee. He arose and went to Sarephta. And when he was come to the gate of the city, he saw the widow woman gathering sticks; and he called her and said to her: Give me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And when she was going to fetch it he called after her, saying: Bring me also, I beseech thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand. And she answered: As the Lord thy God liveth, I have no bread, but only a handful of meal in a pot, and a little oil in a cruse. Behold I am gathering two sticks that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elias said to her: Fear not, but go, and do as thou hast said. But first make for me of the same meal a little hearth cake, and bring it to me; and after make for thyself and thy son. For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: The pot of meal shall not waste, nor the cruse of oil be diminished, until the day wherein the Lord will give rain upon the face of the earth. She went and did according to the word of Elias. And he ate, and she, and her house: and from that day the pot of meal wasted not, and the cruse of oil was not diminished, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke in the hand of Elias.

## XXXV.—Elias fed by an Angel (3 *Kings* xix 1-8)

And Achab told Jezabel all that Elias had done, and how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. And Jezabel sent a messenger to Elias, saying: Such and such things may the gods do to me, and add still more, if by this hour tomorrow I make not thy life as the life

of one of them. Then Elias was afraid, and rising up he went whithersoever he had a mind. And he came to Bersabee of Juda and left his servant there. And he went forward one day's journey into the desert. And when he was there, and sat under a juniper tree, he requested for his soul that he might die, and said: It is enough for me. Lord, take away my soul; for I am no better than my fathers. And he cast himself down, and slept in the shadow of the juniper tree. And behold an angel of the Lord touched him and said to him: Arise and eat. He looked, and behold there was at his head a hearth cake, and a vessel of water. And he ate and drank; and he fell asleep again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said to him: Arise, eat; for thou hast yet a great way to go. And he arose, and ate, and drank, and walked in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights unto the mount of God, Horeb.

## XXXVI.—Eliseus multiplies the Bread (4 *Kings* iv 42-44)

And a certain man came from Baalsalisa bringing to the man of God bread of the first-fruits, twenty loaves of barley, and new corn in his scrip. And he said: Give to the people that they may eat. And his servant answered him: How much is this, that I may set it before a hundred men? He said again: Give to the people that they may eat. For thus saith the Lord: They shall eat, and there shall be left. So he set it before them: and they ate. And there was left according to the word of the Lord.

## XXXVII.—The Doom of Jezabel (4 *Kings* ix 30-37)

And Jehu came into Jezrahel; but Jezabel hearing of his coming in, painted her face with stibic stone, and adorned her head, and looked out of a window at Jehu

coming in at the gate, and said: Can there be peace for Zambri, that hath killed his master? and Jehu lifted up his face to the window, and said: Who is this? And two or three eunuchs bowed down to him. And he said to them: Throw her down headlong. And they threw her down. And the wall was sprinkled with her blood: and the hoofs of the horses trod upon her. And when he was come in to eat and to drink, he said: Go, and see after that cursed woman, and bury her; because she is a king's daughter. And when they went to bury her, they found nothing but the skull, and the feet, and the extremities of her hands. And coming back they told him. And Jehu said: It is the word of the Lord which he spoke by his servant Elias the Thesbite, saying: In the fields of Jezrahel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezabel; and the flesh of Jezabel shall be as dung upon the face of the earth in the field of Jezrahel, so that they who pass by shall say: Is this that same Jezabel?

## FROM THE BOOKS OF PARALIPOMENON

### XXXVIII.—David's Last Prayer (1 *Paralip.* xxix 9-20)

And the people rejoiced when they promised their offerings willingly: because they offered them to the Lord with all their heart. And David the King rejoiced also with a great joy. And he blessed the Lord before all the multitude: and he said: Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of Israel, our father from eternity to eternity. Thine, O Lord, is magnificence, and glory, and power, and victory: and to thee is praise. For all that is in heaven and in earth is thine. Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art above all princes. Thine are riches, and thine is glory: thou hast dominion over all. In thy hand is power and might: in thy hand greatness, and the empire of all things. Now therefore, O God, we give

thanks to thee, and we praise thy glorious name. Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to promise thee all these things? All things are thine: and we have given thee what we received of thy hand. For we are sojourners before thee, and strangers, as were all our fathers. Our days upon earth are as a shadow: and there is no stay. O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee a house for thy holy name is from thy hand: and all things are thine. I know, my God, that thou provest hearts, and lovest simplicity. Wherefore I also in the simplicity of my heart have joyfully offered all these things: and I have seen with great joy thy people, which are here present, offer thee their offerings. O Lord God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep for ever this will of their heart: and let this mind remain always for the worship of thee. And give to Solomon my son a perfect heart, that he may keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy ceremonies, and do all things: and build the house, for which I have provided the charges. And David commanded the assembly: Bless ye the Lord our God. And all the assembly blessed the Lord, the God of their fathers.

## XXXIX.—Conclusion of Solomon's Prayer at the Dedication of his Temple (2 *Paralip.* vi 36-42)

If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not), and thou be angry with them, and deliver them up to their enemies, and they lead them away captive to a land, either afar off or near at hand: and if they be converted in their heart in the land to which they were led captive, and do penance, and pray to thee in the land of their captivity, saying: We have sinned, we have done wickedly, we have dealt unjustly; and return to thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their captivity, to which they were led away, and adore thee

towards the way of their own land which thou gavest their fathers, and of the city, which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built to thy name: then hear thou from heaven, that is, from thy firm dwelling place, their prayers, and do judgement, and forgive thy people, although they have sinned. For thou art my God: let thy eyes, I beseech thee, be open, and let thy ears be attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O Lord God, put on salvation, and thy saints rejoice in good things. O Lord God, turn not away the face of thy anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant.

## XL.—The Fall of the Jewish People
(2 *Paralip.* xxxvi 14-20)

Moreover all the chief of the priests and the people wickedly transgressed according to all the abominations of the Gentiles: and they defiled the house of the Lord, which he had sanctified to himself in Jerusalem. And the Lord the God of their fathers sent to them, by the hand of his messengers, rising early, and daily admonishing them: because he spared his people and his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and there was no remedy. For he brought upon them the king of the Chaldeans: and he slew their young men with the sword in the house of his sanctuary. He had no compassion on young man, or maiden, old man, or even him that stooped for age; but he delivered them all into his hands. And all the vessels in the house of the Lord, great and small, and the treasures of the temple and of the king and of the princes he carried away to Babylon. And the enemies set fire to the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burnt all the towers; and whatsoever was

precious they destroyed. Whosoever escaped the sword was led into Babylon: and there served the king and his sons till the reign of the king of Persia.

## FROM THE BOOKS OF ESDRAS

### XLI.—The Rebuilding of the Temple (1 *Esdras* iii 8-13)

And in the second year of their coming to the temple of God in Jerusalem, the second month, Zorobabel the son of Salathiel, and Josue the son of Josedee, and the rest of their brethren, the priests, and the Levites, and all that were come from the captivity to Jerusalem began. And they appointed Levites from twenty years old and upward, to hasten forward the work of the Lord. Then Josue and his sons and his brethren, Cedmihel and his sons, and the children of Juda, as one man stood to hasten them that did the work in the temple of God: the sons of Henadad, and their sons, and their brethren the Levites. And when the masons laid the foundations of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their ornaments with trumpets: and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise God by the hands of David, king of Israel. And they sung together hymns, and praise to the Lord: because he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, praising the Lord, because the foundations of the temple of the Lord were laid. But many of the priests and the Levites, and the chief of the fathers and the ancients that had seen the former temple, when they had the foundations of this temple before their eyes, wept with a loud voice. And many shouting for joy lifted up their voice. So that one could not distinguish the voice of the shout of joy, from the noise of the weeping of the people: for one with another the people shouted with a loud shout, and the voice was heard afar off.

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## XLII.—The Rededication of the Temple (2 *Esdras* ix 32-38)

Now therefore our God, great, strong, and terrible, who keepest covenant and mercy, turn not away from thy face all the labour which hath come upon us: upon our kings and our princes, and our priests and our prophets, and our fathers and all the people, from the days of the king of Assur until this day. And thou art just in all things that have come upon us: because thou hast done truth, but we have done wickedly. Our kings, our princes, our priests, and our fathers have not kept thy law, and have not minded thy commandments, and thy testimonies which thou hast testified among them. And they have not served thee in their kingdoms, and in thy manifold goodness, which thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land, which thou deliveredst before them: nor did they return from their most wicked devices. Behold we ourselves this day are bondmen: and the land, which thou gavest our fathers, to eat the bread thereof, and the good things thereof; and we ourselves are servants in it. And the fruits thereof grow up for the kings, whom thou hast set over us for our sins; and they have dominion over our bodies, and over our beasts, according to their will; and we are in great tribulation. And because of all this we ourselves make a covenant and write it: and our princes, our Levites, and our priests sign it.

## FROM THE BOOK OF ESTHER

### XLIII.—The Prayer of Esther (*Esther* xiv 3-19)

And she prayed to the Lord the God of Israel saying: O my Lord, who alone art our king, help me a desolate woman, and who have no other helper but thee. I have

heard of my father that thou, O Lord, didst take Israel from among all nations, and our fathers from all their predecessors, to possess them as an everlasting inheritance. And thou hast done to them as thou hast promised. We have sinned in thy sight: and therefore thou hast delivered us into the hands of our enemies. For we have worshipped their gods. Thou art just, O Lord. And now they are not content to oppress us with most hard bondage, but attributing the strength of their hands to the power of their idols, they design to change thy promises, and destroy thy inheritance, and shut the mouths of them that praise thee, and extinguish the glory of thy temple and altar: that they may open the mouths of Gentiles, and praise the strength of idols, and magnify for ever a carnal king. Give not, O Lord, thy sceptre to them that are not, lest they laugh at our ruin. Remember, O Lord, and show thyself to us in the time of our tribulation. Deliver us by thy hand: and help me, who have no other helper but thee, O Lord, who hast the knowledge of all things. O God, who art mighty above all, hear the voice of them that have no other hope: and deliver us from the hand of the wicked. And deliver me from my fear.

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## III.—SELECTIONS FROM THE POETICAL BOOKS

### FROM THE BOOK OF JOB

### XLIV.—The Prosperity of the Wicked (*Job* xxi 7-18)

WHY then do the wicked live; are they advanced and strengthened with riches? Their seed continueth before them, a multitude of kinsmen, and of children's children in their sight. Their houses are secured and peaceable: and the rod of God is not upon them. Their cattle have conceived, and failed not: their cow has calved, and is not deprived of her fruit. Their little ones go out like a flock; and their children dance and play. They take the timbrel and the harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell. Who have said to God: Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what doth it profit us if we pray to him? Yet because their good things are not in their hand, may the counsel of the wicked be far from me. How often shall the lamp of the wicked be put out, and a deluge come upon them, and he shall distribute the sorrows of his wrath? They shall be as chaff before the face of the wind, and as ashes which the whirlwind scattereth.

### XLV.—The Source of Wisdom (*Job* xxviii 12-28)

But where is wisdom to be found, and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the land of them that live

in delights. The depth saith: It is not in me: and the sea saith: It is not with me. The finest gold shall not purchase it: neither shall silver be weighed in exchange for it. It shall not be compared with the dyed colours of India, or with the most precious stone sardonyx, or the sapphire. Gold or crystal cannot equal it; neither shall any vessels of gold be changed for it. High and eminent things shall not be mentioned in comparison of it; but wisdom is drawn out of secret places. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not be equal to it: neither shall it be compared to the cleanest dyeing. Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding? It is hid from the eyes of all living, and the fowls of the air know it not. Destruction and death have said: With our ears we have heard the fame thereof. God understandeth the way of it, and he knoweth the place thereof. For he beholdeth the ends of the world: and looketh on all things that are under heaven. Who made a weight for the winds, and weighed the waters by measure. When he gave a law for the rain, and a way for the sounding storms. Then he saw it, and declared, and prepared, and searched it. And he said to man: Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

## XLVI.—The Greatness of God (*Job* xxxviii 1-11)

Then the Lord answered Job out of a whirlwind, and said: Who is this that wrappeth up sentences in unskilful words? Gird up thy loins like a man: I will ask thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? tell me if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Upon what are its bases grounded? or who laid the corner stone thereof, when the morning stars praised me together, and all the sons of God made a joyful melody?

Who shut up the sea with doors when it broke forth as issuing out of the womb: when I made a cloud the garment thereof, and wrapped it in a mist as in swaddling bands? I set my bounds around it, and made it bars and doors; and I said: Hitherto thou shalt come, and shalt go no further: and here thou shalt break thy swelling waves.

## FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS

### XLVII.—God in his Works (*Psalm* viii)

O Lord our Lord:
How admirable is thy name in the whole earth!
For thy magnificence is elevated above the heavens.
Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings
Thou hast perfected praise,
Because of thy enemies:
That thou mayest destroy the enemy and the avenger.
For I will behold thy heavens, the works of thy fingers:
The moon and the stars which thou hast founded.
What is man that thou art mindful of him?
Or the son of man that thou visitest him?
Thou hast made him a little less than the angels:
Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour,
And hast set him over the works of thy hands.
Thou hast subjected all things under his feet:
All sheep and oxen,
Moreover the beasts also of the fields.
The birds of the air and the fishes of the sea.
That pass through the paths of the sea.
O Lord our Lord:
How admirable is thy name in all the earth!

### XLVIII.—Trust in God (*Psalm* xxii)

The Lord ruleth me:
And I shall want nothing.
He hath set me in a place of pasture.

He hath brought me up on the water of refreshment:
He hath converted my soul.
He hath led me on the paths of justice,
For his own name's sake.
For though I should walk
In the midst of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evils, for thou art with me.
Thy rod and thy staff they have comforted me.
Thou hast prepared a table before me,
Against them that afflict me.
Thou hast anointed my head with oil;
And my chalice which inebriateth me, how goodly is it!
And thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life.
And that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
Unto length of days.

## XLIX.—Praise of God (*Psalm* xlvi)

O clap your hands, all ye nations:
Shout unto God with the voice of joy,
For the Lord is high, terrible:
A great king over all the earth.
He hath subdued the people under us:
And the nations under our feet.
He hath chosen for us his inheritance,
The beauty of Jacob which he hath loved.
God is ascended with jubilee:
And the Lord with the sound of trumpet.
Sing praises to our God, sing ye:
Sing praises to our king, sing ye.
For God is the king of all the earth:
Sing ye wisely.
God shall reign over the nations:
God sitteth on his holy throne.
The princes of the people are gathered together,
With the God of Abraham:
For the strong gods of the earth are exceedingly exalted.

## L.—Blessing of God (*Psalm* lxvi)

May God have mercy on us, and bless us:
May he cause the light of his countenance to shine upon us;
And may he have mercy on us.
That we may know thy way upon earth:
Thy salvation in all nations.
Let people confess to thee, O God:
Let all people give praise to thee.
Let the nations be glad and rejoice:
For thou judgest the people with justice,
And directest the nations upon earth.
Let the people, O God, confess to thee;
Let all the people give praise to thee:
The earth hath yielded her fruit.
May God, our God bless us.
May God bless us:
And all the ends of the earth fear him.

## LI.—Goodness of God (*Psalm* cii)

Bless the Lord, O my soul:
And let all that is within me bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul:
And never forget all he hath done for thee.
Who forgiveth all thy iniquities:
Who healeth all thy diseases.
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction:
Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion.
Who satisfieth thy desire with good things:
Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's.
The Lord doeth mercies, and judgement
For all that suffer wrong.
He hath made his ways known to Moses:
His wills to the children of Israel.

The Lord is compassionate and merciful:
Long suffering and plenteous in mercy.
He will not always be angry:
Nor will he threaten for ever.
He hath not dealt with us according to our sins:
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
For according to the height of the heaven above the earth,
He hath strengthened his mercy towards them that fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath he removed our iniquities from us.
As a father hath compassion on his children,
So hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him:
For he knoweth our frame.
He remembereth that we are dust.
Man's days are as grass:
As the flower of the field so shall he flourish.
For the spirit shall pass in him,
And he shall not be:
And he shall know his place no more.
But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity
And unto eternity, upon them that fear him.
And his justice unto children's children,
To such as keep his covenant,
And are mindful of his commandments to do them.
The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven:
And his kingdom shall rule over all.
Bless the Lord, all ye his Angels:
You that are mighty in strength, and execute his word,
Hearkening to the voice of his orders.
Bless the Lord, all ye his hosts:
You ministers of his that do his will.
Bless the Lord, all his works:
In every place of his dominion,
O my soul, bless thou the Lord.

## FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

### LII.—Warning of Wisdom (*Proverbs* i 20-30)

Wisdom preacheth abroad: she uttereth her voice in the streets. At the head of multitudes she crieth out: in the entrance of the gates of the city she uttereth her words, saying: O children, how long will you love childishness, and fools covet those things which are hurtful to themselves, and the unwise hate knowledge? Turn ye at my reproof: behold I will utter my spirit to you, and will shew you my words. Because I called, and you refused: I stretched out my hand; and there was none that regarded. You have despised all my counsel, and have neglected my reprehensions. I also will laugh in your destruction: and will mock when that shall come to you which you feared. When sudden calamity shall fall on you, and destruction, as a tempest, shall be at hand; when tribulation and distress shall come upon you; then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear: they shall rise in the morning, and shall not find me. Because they have hated instruction, and received not the fear of the Lord, nor consented to my counsel, but despised all my reproof.

### LIII.—Words of Wisdom (*Proverbs* xv 1-14)

A mild answer breaketh wrath: but a harsh word stirreth up fury. The tongue of the wise adorneth knowledge: but the mouth of fools bubbleth out folly. The eyes of the Lord in every place behold the good and the evil. A peaceable tongue is a tree of life: but that which is immoderate shall crush the spirit. A fool laugheth at the instructions of his father: but he that regardeth reproofs shall become prudent. In abundant justice

there is the greatest strength: but the devices of the wicked shall be rooted out. The house of the just is very much strength: and in the fruits of the wicked is trouble. The lips of the wise shall disperse knowledge: the heart of fools shall be unlike. The victims of the wicked are abominable to the Lord: the vows of the just are acceptable. The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: he that followeth justice is beloved by him. Instruction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way of life: he that hateth reproof shall die. Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more the hearts of the children of men? A corrupt man loveth not one that reproveth him: nor will he go to the wise. A glad heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by grief of mind the spirit is cast down. The heart of the wise seeketh instruction: and the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

## LIV.—A True Woman (*Proverbs* xxxi 10-30)

Who shall find a valiant woman? Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of her. The heart of her husband trusted in her: and he shall have no need of spoils. She will render him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She hath sought wool and flax, and hath wrought by the counsel of her hands. She is like the merchant's ship; she bringeth her bread from afar. And she hath risen in the night, and given prey to her household, and victuals to her maidens. She hath considered a field, and bought it; with the fruit of her hands she hath planted a vineyard. She hath girded her loins with strength, and hath strengthened her arm. She hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good: her lamp shall not be put out in the night. She hath put out her hand to strong things: and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She hath opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hands to the poor. She shall not fear for her house in the cold

of snow: for all her domestics are clothed with double garments. She hath made for herself clothing of tapestry: fine linen and purple is her covering. Her husband is honourable in the gates, when he sitteth among the senators of the land. She made fine linen, and sold it; and delivered a girdle to the Chanaanite. Strength and beauty are her clothing: and she shall laugh in the latter day. She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. She hath looked well to the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle. Her children rose up, and called her blessed: her husband, and he praised her. Many daughters have gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all. Favour is deceitful and beauty in vain: the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

## FROM THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

### LV.—Vanity (*Ecclesiastes* i 1-14)

The words of Ecclesiastes, the son of David, king of Jerusalem. Vanity of vanities, said Ecclesiastes; vanity of vanities, and all is vanity. What hath a man more of all his labour, that he taketh under the sun? One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth standeth for ever. The sun riseth, and goeth down, and returneth to his place: and there rising again, maketh his round by the south, and turneth again to the north: the spirit goeth forward surveying all places round about, and returneth to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea doth not overflow: unto the place from whence the rivers come, they return, to flow again. All things are hard: man cannot explain them by word. The eye is not filled with seeing, neither is the ear filled with hearing. What is it that hath been? the same thing that shall be. What is it that hath been

done? the same that shall be done. Nothing under the sun is new: neither is any man able to say: Behold, this is new: for it hath already gone before, in the ages that were before us. There is no remembrance of former things: nor indeed of those things which hereafter are to come, shall there be any remembrance with them that shall be in the latter end. I, Ecclesiastes, was king over Israel in Jerusalem, and I proposed in my mind to seek and search out wisely concerning all things that are done under the sun. This painful occupation hath God given to the children of men, to be exercised therein. I have seen all things that are done under the sun: and behold, all is vanity, and vexation of spirit.

## FROM THE BOOK OF WISDOM

### LVI.—The Mind of the Wicked (*Wisdom* ii 1-25)

For they have said, reasoning with themselves, but not right: The time of our life is short and tedious; and in the end of a man there is no remedy; and no man hath been known to have returned from hell. For we are born of nothing; and after this we shall be as if we had not been: for the breath in our nostrils is smoke: and speech a spark to move our heart, which being put out, our body shall be ashes; and our spirit shall be poured abroad as soft air: and our life shall pass away as the trace of a cloud, and shall be dispersed as a mist, which is driven away by the beams of the sun, and overpowered with the heat thereof. And our name in time shall be forgotten: and no man shall have any remembrance of our works. For our time is as the passing of a shadow; and there is no going back of our end; for it is fast sealed, and no man returneth. Come therefore, and let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use

the creatures as in youth. Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments: and let not the flower of the time pass by us. Let us crown ourselves with roses, before they be withered: let no meadow escape our riot. Let none of us go without his part in luxury: let us everywhere leave tokens of joy: for this is our portion, and this our lot. Let us oppress the poor just man, and not spare the widow, nor honour the ancient grey hairs of the aged. But let our strength be the law of justice: for that which is feeble is found to be nothing worth. Let us therefore lie in wait for the just; because he is not for our turn; and he is contrary to our doings, and upbraideth us with transgressions of the law, and divulgeth against us the sins of our way of life. He boasteth that he hath the knowledge of God, and calleth himself the son of God. He is become a censurer of our thoughts. He is grievous unto us, even to behold: for his life is not like other men's, and his ways are very different. We are esteemed by him as triflers; and he abstaineth from our ways as from filthiness; and he preferreth the latter end of the just, and glorieth that he hath God for his father. Let us see then if his words be true; and let us prove what shall happen to him; and we shall know what his end shall be. For if he be the true son of God, he will defend him, and will deliver him from the hands of his enemies. Let us examine him by outrages and tortures, that we may know his meekness and try his patience. Let us condemn him to a most shameful death; for there shall be respect had unto him by his words. These things they thought, and were deceived: for their own malice blinded them. And they knew not the secrets of God, nor hoped for the wages of justice, nor esteemed the honour of holy souls. For God created man incorruptible, and to the image of his own likeness he made him. But by the envy of the devil, death came into the world: and they follow him that are of his side.

## LVII.—The Just (*Wisdom* iii 1-10)

But the souls of the just are in the hand of God; and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure was taken for misery: and their going away from us, for utter destruction: but they are in peace. And though in the sight of men they suffered torments, their hope is full of immortality. Afflicted in few things, in many they shall be well rewarded: because God hath tried them, and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace he hath proved them; and as a victim of a holocaust, he hath received them; and in time there shall be respect had to them. The just shall shine, and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds. They shall judge nations, and rule over people: and their Lord shall reign for ever. They that trust in him shall understand the truth: and they that are faithful in love shall rest in him: for grace and peace is to his elect. But the wicked shall be punished according to their own devices: who have neglected the just, and have revolted from the Lord.

## LVIII.—The Just (*Wisdom* iv 7-16)

But the just man, if he be prevented with death, shall be in rest. For venerable old age is not that of long time, nor counted by the number of years: but the understanding of man is grey hairs, and a spotless life is old age. He pleased God and was beloved, and living among sinners he was translated. He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For the bewitching of vanity obscureth good things, and, the wandering of concupiscence overturneth the innocent mind. Being made perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time. For his soul pleased God: there-

fore he hastened to bring him out of the midst of iniquities: but the people see this, and understand not, nor lay up such things in their hearts: that the grace of God, and his mercy is with his saints, and that he hath respect to his chosen. But the just that is dead, condemneth the wicked that are living, and youth soon ended, the long life of the unjust.

## FROM THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS

### LIX.—Temptation (*Ecclesiasticus* ii 1-10)

Son, when thou comest to the service of God, stand in justice and in fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation. Humble thy heart, and endure; incline thy ear, and receive the words of understanding: and make not haste in the time of clouds. Wait on God with patience: join thyself to God, and endure, that thy life may be increased in the latter end. Take all that shall be brought upon thee: and in thy sorrow endure, and in thy humiliation keep patience. For gold and silver are tried in the fire, but acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation. Believe God, and he will recover thee and direct thy way: and trust in him. Keep his fear, and grow old therein. Ye that fear the Lord, wait for his mercy: and go not aside from him, lest ye fall. Ye that fear the Lord, believe him: and your reward shall not be made void. Ye that fear the Lord, hope in him: and mercy shall come to you for your delight. Ye that fear the Lord, love him: and your hearts shall be enlightened.

### LX.—A Friend (*Ecclesiasticus* vi 7-17)

If thou wouldst get a friend, try him before thou takest him, and do not credit him easily. For there is a friend for his own occasion: and he will not abide in

the day of thy trouble. And there is a friend that turneth to enmity: and there is a friend that will disclose hatred, and strife, and reproaches. And there is a friend a companion at the table; and he will not abide in the day of distress. A friend, if he continue steadfast, shall be to thee as thyself, and shall act with confidence among them of thy household. If he humble himself before thee and hide himself from thy face, thou shalt have unanimous friendship for good. Separate thyself for good. Separate thyself from thy enemies, and take heed of thy friends. A faithful friend is a strong defence: and he that hath found him, hath found a treasure. Nothing can be compared to a faithful friend: and no weight of gold and silver is able to countervail the goodness of his fidelity. A faithful friend is the medicine of life and immortality: and they that fear the Lord shall find him. He that feareth God shall likewise have good friendship: because according to him shall his friend be.

## LXI.—The Works of God (*Ecclesiasticus* xviii 1-14)

He that liveth for ever created all things together. God only shall be justified: and he remaineth an invincible king for ever. Who is able to declare his works? For who shall search out his glorious acts? And who shall shew forth the power of his majesty? or who shall be able to declare his mercy? Nothing may be taken away, nor added, neither is it possible to find out the glorious works of God. When a man hath done, then shall he begin: and when he leaveth off, he shall be at a loss. What is man, and what is his grace? and what is his good, or what is his evil? The number of the days of man at the most are a hundred years: as a drop of water of the sea are they esteemed: and as a pebble of the sand, so are a few years compared to eternity. Therefore God is patient in them, and poureth forth his mercy upon them. He hath seen the presumption of their heart, that it is

wicked, and hath known their end, that it is evil. Therefore hath he filled up his mercy in their favour, and hath shewn them the way of justice. The compassion of man is toward his neighbour, but the mercy of God is upon all flesh. He hath mercy, and teacheth, and correcteth, as a shepherd doth his flock. He hath mercy on him that receiveth the discipline of mercy, and that maketh haste in the judgements.

## LXII.—A Prayer (*Ecclesiasticus* xxxvi 1-19)

Have mercy upon us, O God of all; and behold us, and shew us the light of thy mercies. And send thy fear upon the nations, that have not sought after thee: that they may know that there is no God beside thee, and that they may shew forth thy wonders. Lift up thy hand over the strange nations, that they may see thy power. For as thou hast been sanctified in us in their sight, so thou shalt be magnified among them in our presence. That they may know thee, as we also have known thee, that there is no God beside thee, O Lord. Renew thy signs, and work new miracles. Glorify thy hand, and thy right arm. Raise up indignation, and pour out wrath. Take away the adversary, and crush the enemy. Hasten the time, and remember the end, that they may declare thy wonderful works. Let him that escapeth be consumed by the rage of the fire: and let him perish that oppress thy people. Crush the head of the princes of the enemies that say: There is no other besides us. Gather together all the tribes of Jacob; that they may know that there is no God besides thee, and may declare thy great works: and thou shalt inherit them as from the beginning. Have mercy on thy people, upon whom thy name is invoked; and upon Israel, whom thou hast raised up to be thy firstborn. Have mercy on Jerusalem, the city which thou hast sanctified, the city of thy rest. Fill Sion with thy unspeakable

words, and thy people with thy glory. Give testimony to them that are thy creatures from the beginning; and raise up the prophecies which the former prophets spoke in thy name. Reward them that patiently wait for thee, that thy prophets may be found faithful: and hear the prayers of thy servants, according to the blessing of Aaron over thy people, and direct us into the way of justice: and let all know that dwell upon the earth, that thou art God the beholder of all ages.

### LXIII.—Thanksgiving (*Ecclesiasticus* li 8-17)

My soul shall praise the Lord even to death. And my life was drawing near to hell beneath. They compassed me on every side, and there was no one that would help me. I looked for the succour of men, and there was none. I remembered thy mercy, O Lord, and thy works, which are from the beginning of the world. How thou deliverest them that wait for thee, O Lord, and savest them out of the hands of the nations. Thou hast exalted my dwelling place upon the earth, and I have prayed for death to pass away. I called upon the Lord, the father of my Lord, that he would not leave me in the day of my trouble, and in the time of the proud, without help. I will praise thy name continually, and will praise it with thanksgiving, and my prayer was heard. And thou hast saved me from destruction, and hast delivered me from the evil time. Therefore I will give thanks, and praise thee, and bless the name of the Lord.

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# IV.—SELECTIONS FROM THE MAJOR PROPHETS

## I. FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAS

### LXIV.—The Abandoned Vineyard (*Isaias* v 1-7)

I WILL sing to my beloved the canticle of my cousin concerning his vineyard. My beloved had a vineyard on a hill in a fruitful place. And he fenced it in, and picked the stones out of it, and planted it with the choicest vines, and built a tower in the midst thereof, and set up a winepress therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and ye men of Juda, judge between me and my vineyard. What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard that I have not done to it? was it that I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it hath brought forth wild grapes? And now I will shew you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be wasted: I will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will make it desolate: it shall not be pruned, and it shall not be digged: but briers and thorns shall come up: and I will command the clouds to rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel: and the man of Juda, his pleasant plant: and I looked that he should do judgement, and behold iniquity: and do justice, and behold a cry.

### LXV.—The Child to Come (*Isaias* ix 2-7)

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen. Thou hast multiplied the nation,

*and* hast not increased the joy. They shall rejoice before thee, as they that rejoice in the harvest, as conquerors rejoice after taking a prey, when they divide the spoils. For the yoke of their burden, and the rod of their shoulder, and the sceptre of their oppressor thou hast overcome, as in the day of Madian. For every violent taking of spoils, with tumult, and garment mingled with blood, shall be burnt, and be fuel for the fire. For a *child is born* to us: and a son is given to us; and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of peace. His empire shall be multiplied; and there shall be no end of peace: he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom: to establish it and strengthen it with judgement and with justice, from henceforth and for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

## LXVI.—The Child to Come (*Isaias* xi 1-7)

And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears. But he shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. And justice shall be the girdle of his loins; and faith the girdle of his reins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb; and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: the calf and the lion, and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead

them. The calf and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall rest together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

## LXVII.—The Curse of Babylon (*Isaias* xiv 11-20)

Thy pride is brought down to hell, thy carcass is fallen down: under thee shall the moth be strewed, and worms shall be thy covering. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning? How art thou fallen to the earth, that didst wound the nations? And thou saidst in thy heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit. They that shall see thee shall turn toward thee and behold thee. Is this the man that troubled the earth, that shook kingdoms, that made the world a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof, that opened not the prison to his prisoners? All the kings of the nations have all of them slept in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave, as an unprofitable branch defiled, and wrapped up among them that were slain by the sword, and are gone down to the bottom of the pit as a rotten carcass. Thou shalt not keep company with them, even in burial: for thou hast destroyed thy land, thou hast slain thy people: the seed of the wicked shall not be named for ever.

## LXVIII.—The Character of Christ (*Isaias* xlii 1-7)

Behold my servant; I will uphold him: my elect, my soul delighteth in him: I have given my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor have respect to person, neither shall

his voice be heard abroad. The bruised reed he shall not break, and smoking flax he shall not quench: he shall bring forth judgement unto truth. He shall not be sad, nor troublesome, till he set judgement in the earth: and the islands shall wait for his law. Thus said the Lord God that created the heavens, and stretched them out: that established the earth, and the things that spring out of it: that giveth bread to the people upon it, and spirit to them that tread thereon. I the Lord have called thee in justice, and taken thee by the hand, and preserved thee. And I have given thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. That thou mightest open the eyes of the blind, and bring forth the prisoner out of prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

## LXIX.—The Suffering Christ (*Isaias* liii 1-12)

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? And he shall grow up as a tender plant before him, and as a root out of a thirsty ground: there is no beauty in him, nor comeliness: and we have seen him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be desirous of him: despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity: and his look *was* as it were hidden and despised: whereupon we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows: and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, every one hath turned aside into his own way: and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was offered because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth: he shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer,

and he shall not open his mouth. He was taken away from distress, and from judgement: who shall declare his generation? because he is cut off out of the land of the living: for the wickedness of my people have I struck him. And he shall give the ungodly for his burial, and the rich for his death: because he hath done no iniquity, neither was there deceit in his mouth. And the Lord was pleased to bruise him in infirmity: if he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed, and the will of the Lord shall be prosperous in his hand. Because his soul hath laboured, he shall see and be filled: by his knowledge shall this my just servant justify many, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I distribute to him very many, and he shall divide the spoils of the strong, because he hath delivered his soul unto death, and was reputed with the wicked: and he hath borne the sins of many, and hath prayed for the transgressors.

## LXX.—The Office of Christ (*Isaias* lxi 1-11)

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me: he hath sent me to preach to the meek, to heal the contrite of heart, and to preach a release to the captives, and deliverance to them that are shut up: to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn. To appoint to the mourners of Sion, and to give them a crown for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, a garment of praise for the spirit of grief: and they shall be called in it the mighty ones of justice, the planting of the Lord to glorify *him*. And they shall build the places that have been waste from old, and shall raise up ancient ruins, and shall repair the desolate cities, that were destroyed for generation and generation. And strangers shall stand and shall feed your flocks: and the sons of strangers shall be your husbandmen, and the dressers of your vines. But you shall be called the priests of the Lord: to you it shall

be said: Ye ministers of our God: you shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and you shall pride yourselves in their glory. For your double confusion and shame, they shall praise their part: therefore shall they receive double in their land, everlasting joy shall be unto them. For I am the Lord that love judgement, and hate robbery in a holocaust: and I will make their work in truth, and I will make a perpetual covenant with them. And they shall know their seed among the Gentiles, and their offspring in the midst of peoples: all that shall see them shall know them, that these are the seed which the Lord hath blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, and my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garment of salvation: and with the robe of justice he hath covered me, as a bridegroom decked with a crown, and as a bride adorned with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth her seed to shoot forth: so shall the Lord God make justice to spring forth, and praise before all the nations.

## II. FROM THE PROPHET JEREMIAS

### LXXI.—The Call of Jeremias (*Jeremias* i 6-10)

And I said: Ah, ah, ah, Lord God: behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child. And the Lord said to me: Say not: I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee: and whatsoever I shall command thee, thou shalt speak. Be not afraid at their presence: for I am with thee to deliver thee, said the Lord. And the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth: and the Lord said to me: Behold, I have given my words in thy mouth. Lo, I have set thee this day over the nations, and over kingdoms, to root up, and to pull down, and to waste, and to destroy, and to build, and to plant.

## LXXII.—Prayer of Jeremias (*Jeremias* xvii 13-18)

O Lord, the hope of Israel: all that forsake thee shall be confounded: they that depart from thee shall be written in the earth: because they have forsaken the Lord, the vein of living waters. Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed: save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise. Behold, they say to me: Where is the word of the Lord? let it come. And I am not troubled, following thee for my pastor, and I have not desired the day of man, thou knowest. That which went out of my lips hath been right in thy sight. Be not thou a terror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of affliction. Let them be confounded that persecute me, and let not me be confounded: let them be afraid, and let not me be afraid: bring upon them the day of affliction, and with a double destruction destroy them.

## LXXIII.—The Potter (*Jeremias* xviii 1-10)

The word that came to Jeremias from the Lord, saying: Arise and go down into the potter's house, and there thou shalt hear my words. And I went down into the potter's house, and behold, he was doing a work on the wheel. And the vessel was broken which he was making of clay with his hands: and turning he made another vessel, as it seemed good in his eyes to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Cannot I do with you, as this potter, O house of Israel, saith the Lord? behold, as clay *is* in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. I will suddenly speak against a nation, and against a kingdom, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy it. If that nation against which I have spoken shall repent of their evil, I also will repent of the evil that I have thought to do to them. And I will

suddenly speak of a nation and of a kingdom, to build up and plant it. If it shall do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice: I will repent of the good that I have spoken to do unto it.

## LXXIV.—The Future Pastor (*Jeremias* xxiii 1-6)

Woe to the pastors, that destroy and tear the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord. Therefore thus saith the Lord the God of Israel to the pastors that feed my people: You have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold I will visit upon you for the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. And I will gather together the remnant of my flock, out of all the lands into which I have cast them out; and I will make them return to their own fields, and they shall increase and be multiplied. And I will set up pastors over them, and they shall feed them; they shall fear no more, and they shall not be dismayed: and none shall be wanting of their number, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, and I will raise up to David a just branch: and a king shall reign, and shall be wise: and shall execute judgement and justice in the earth. In those days shall Juda be saved, and Israel shall dwell confidently: and this is the name that they shall call him: The Lord our Just One.

## LXXV.—The Promised Return (*Jeremias* xxix 1-13)

Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremias the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the residue of the ancients that were carried into captivity, and to the priests and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nabuchodonosor had carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon: after that Jechonias the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, and the princes of Juda, and of Jeru-

salem, and the craftsmen, and the engravers were departed out of Jerusalem: by the hand of Elasa the son of Saphan, and Gamarias the son of Helcias, whom Sedecias king of Juda sent to Babylon to Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon, saying: Thus saith the Lord of hosts the God of Israel, to all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build ye houses, and dwell in them: and plant orchards, and eat the fruit of them. Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters: and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands: and let them bear sons and daughters: and be ye multiplied there, and be not few in number. And seek the peace of the city, to which I have caused you to be carried away captives: and pray to the Lord for it, for in the peace thereof shall be your peace. For thus saith the Lord of hosts the God of Israel: Let not your prophets that are in the midst of you, and your diviners deceive you: and give no heed to your dreams which you dream: for they prophesy falsely to you in my name: and I have not sent them, saith the Lord. For thus saith the Lord: When the seventy years shall begin to be accomplished in Babylon, I will visit you: and I will perform my good word in your favour, to bring you again to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of affliction, to give you an end and patience. And you shall call upon me, and you shall go: and you shall pray to me, and I will hear you. You shall seek me, and shall find me, when you shall seek me with all your heart.

## LXXVI.—Imprisonment of Jeremias
## (*Jeremias* xxxviii 1-13)

Now Saphatias the son of Mathan, and Gedelias the son of Phassur, and Juchal the son of Selemias, and Phassur the son of Melchias, heard the words that Jere-

mias spoke to all the people, saying: Thus saith the Lord: Whosoever shall remain in this city shall die by the sword, and by famine, and by pestilence: but he that shall go forth to the Chaldeans shall live, and his life shall be safe, and he shall live. Thus saith the Lord: This city shall surely be delivered into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it. And the princes said to the king: We beseech thee that this man may be put to death: for on purpose he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of the people, speaking to them according to these words: for this man seeketh not peace to this people, but evil. And king Sedecias said: Behold, he is in your hands: for it is not lawful for the king to deny you anything. Then they took Jeremias, and cast him into the dungeon of Melchias the son of Amelech, which was in the entry of the prison: and they let down Jeremias by ropes into the dungeon, wherein there was no water, but mire, and Jeremias sunk into the mire. Now Abdemelech the Ethiopian, an eunuch that was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremias in the dungeon: but the king was sitting in the gate of Benjamin. And Abdemelech went out of the king's house, and spoke to the king, saying: My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done against Jeremias the prophet, casting him into the dungeon to die there with hunger: for there is no more bread in the city. Then the king commanded Abdemelech the Ethiopian, saying: Take from hence thirty men with thee, and draw up Jeremias the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. So Abdemelech, taking the men with him, went into the king's house, that was under the storehouse: and he took from thence old rags, and old rotten things, and he let them down by cords to Jeremias into the dungeon. And Abdemelech the Ethiopian said to Jeremias: Put these old rags, and these rent and rotten things under thy arms, and upon the cords: and Jeremias did so.

And they drew up Jeremias with the cords, and brought him forth out of the dungeon. And Jeremias remained in the entry of the prison.

## LXXVII.—Curse of Babylon (*Jeremias* l 6-13)

My people hath been a lost flock: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, and have made them wander in the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill: they have forgotten their resting-place. All that found them have devoured them: and their enemies said: We have not sinned *in so doing*: because they have sinned against the Lord the beauty of justice, and against the Lord the hope of their fathers. Remove out of the midst of Babylon: and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans: and be ye as kids at the head of the flock. For behold, I raise up, and will bring against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the land of the north: and they shall be prepared against her; and from thence she shall be taken: their arrows, like those of a mighty man, a destroyer, shall not return in vain. And Chaldea shall be made a prey: all that waste her shall be filled, saith the Lord. Because you rejoice, and speak great things, pillaging my inheritance: because you are spread abroad as calves upon the grass, and have bellowed as bulls. Your mother is confounded exceedingly; and she that bore you is made even with the dust: behold, she shall be the last among the nations, a wilderness unpassable and dry. Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but shall be wholly desolate; every one that shall pass by Babylon shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all her plagues.

## III.—FROM THE LAMENTATIONS

### LXXVIII.—Lamentation over Jerusalem (*Lamentations* ii 13-16)

To what shall I compare thee, or to what shall I liken thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? or to what shall I equal thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Sion? for great as the sea is thy destruction: who shall heal thee? Thy prophets have seen false and foolish things for thee: and they have not laid open thy iniquity, to excite thee to penance: but they have seen for thee false revelations and banishments. All they that passed by the way have clapped their hands at thee: they have hissed, and wagged their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying: Is this the city of perfect beauty, the joy of all the earth? All thy enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they have hissed and gnashed with the teeth, and have said: We will swallow her up: lo, this is the day which we looked for: we have found it: we have seen it.

## IV.—FROM THE PROPHET BARUCH

### LXXIX.—The People's Prayer (*Baruch* iii 1-8)

And now, O Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, the soul in anguish, and the troubled spirit crieth to thee: Hear, O Lord, and have mercy, for thou art a merciful God, and have pity on us: for we have sinned before thee. For thou remainest for ever, and shall we perish everlastingly? O Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, hear now the prayer of the dead of Israel, and of their children, that have sinned before thee, and have not hearkened to the voice of the Lord their God, wherefore evils have cleaved fast to us. Remember not the ini-

quities of our fathers, but think upon thy hand, and upon thy name at this time: for thou art the Lord our God, and we will praise thee, O Lord: because for this end thou hast put thy fear in our hearts, to the intent that we should call upon thy name, and praise thee in our captivity; for we are converted from the iniquity of our fathers, who sinned before thee. And behold, we are at this day in our captivity, whereby thou hast scattered us to be a reproach, and a curse, and an offence, according to all the iniquities of our fathers, who departed from thee, O Lord our God.

## V.—FROM THE PROPHET EZECHIEL

### LXXX.—The Prophet's Mission (*Ezechiel* iii 1-9)

And he said to me: Son of man, eat all that thou shalt find: eat this book, and go speak to the children of Israel. And I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that book: and he said to me: Son of man, thy belly shall eat, and thy bowels shall be filled with this book, which I give thee. And I did eat it: and it was sweet as honey in my mouth. And he said to me: Son of man, go to the house of Israel, and thou shalt speak my words to them. For thou art not sent to a people of a profound speech, and of an unknown tongue, *but* to the house of Israel; nor to many nations of a strange speech, and of an unknown tongue, whose words thou canst not understand: and if thou wert sent to them, they would hearken to thee. But the house of Israel will not hearken to thee: because they will not hearken to me: for all the house of Israel are of a hard forehead and an obstinate heart. Behold, I have made thy face stronger than their faces, and thy forehead harder than their foreheads. I have made thy face like an adamant, and like flint; fear them not, neither be thou dismayed at their presence: for they are a provoking house.

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## LXXXI.—The Doom of Tyre (*Ezechiel* xxviii 1-10)

And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre: Thus saith the Lord God: Because thy heart is lifted up, and thou hast said: I am God, and I sit in the chair of God in the heart of the sea: whereas thou art a man, and not God: and hast set thy heart as if it were the heart of God. Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel: no secret is hid from thee. In thy wisdom and thy understanding thou hast made thyself strong: and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures. By the greatness of thy wisdom, and by thy traffic, thou hast increased thy strength: and thy heart is lifted up with thy strength. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God: Because thy heart is lifted up as the heart of God: therefore behold, I will bring upon thee strangers the strongest of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom: and they shall defile thy beauty. They shall kill thee, and bring thee down: and thou shalt die the death of them that are slain in the heart of the sea. Wilt thou yet say before them that slay thee: I am God: whereas thou art a man, and not God, in the hand of them that slay thee? Thou shalt die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.

## LXXXII.—The Vision of Bones (*Ezechiel* xxxvii 1-14)

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and brought me forth in the spirit of the Lord: and set me down in the midst of a plain that was full of bones. And he led me about through them on every side: now they were very many upon the face of the plain: and they were exceeding dry. And he said to me: Son of man, dost thou think these bones shall live? And I answered: O Lord God,

thou knowest. And he said to me: Prophesy concerning these bones; and say to them: Ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will send spirit into you, and you shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to grow over you, and will cover you with skin: and I will give you spirit; and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord. And I prophesied as he had commanded me: and as I prophesied there was a noise, and behold, a commotion: and the bones came together, each one to its joint. And I saw, and behold, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them: and the skin was stretched out over them; but there was no spirit in them. And he said to me: Prophesy to the spirit, prophesy, O son of man, and say to the spirit: Thus saith the Lord God: Come, spirit, from the four winds, and blow upon these slain; and let them live again. And I prophesied as he had commanded me; and the spirit came into them, and they lived: and they stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. And he said to me: Son of man, all these bones are the house of Israel: they say: Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off. Therefore prophesy, and say to them: Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves, and will bring you out of your sepulchres, O my people: and will bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have opened your sepulchres, and shall have brought you out of your graves, O my people: and shall have put my spirit in you, and you shall live, and I shall make you rest upon your own land: and you shall know that I the Lord have spoken, and done it, saith the Lord God.

## VI.—FROM THE PROPHET DANIEL

### LXXXIII.—Prayer of Daniel (*Daniel* ix 4-19)

And I prayed to the Lord my God, and I made my confession, and said: I beseech thee, O Lord God, great and terrible, who keepest the covenant, and mercy to them that love thee, and keep thy commandments. We have sinned, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly, and have revolted: and we have gone aside from thy commandments and thy judgements. We have not hearkened to thy servants the prophets that have spoken in thy name to our kings, to our princes, to our fathers, and to all the people of the land. To thee, O Lord, justice; but to us confusion of face, as at this day to the men of Juda, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, to them that are near, and to them that are far off in all the countries whither thou hast driven them, for their iniquities by which they have sinned against thee. O Lord, to us *belongeth* confusion of face, to our princes, and to our fathers that have sinned. But to thee, the Lord our God, mercy and forgiveness, for we have departed from thee. And we have not hearkened to the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his law, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. And all Israel have transgressed thy law, and have turned away from hearing thy voice: and the malediction, and the curse which is written in the book of Moses, the servant of God, is fallen upon us, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words which he spoke against us, and against our princes that judged us, that he would bring in upon us a great evil such as never was under all the heaven, according to that which hath been done in Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us; and we entreated not thy face, O Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities,

and think on thy truth. And the Lord hath watched upon the evil, and hath brought it upon us: the Lord our God is just in all his works which he hath done: for we have not hearkened to his voice. And now, O Lord our God, who hast brought forth thy people out of the land of Egypt with a strong hand, and hast made thee a name as at this day: we have sinned, we have committed iniquity, O Lord, against all thy justice: let thy wrath and thy indignation be turned away, I beseech thee, from thy city Jerusalem, and from thy holy mountain. For by reason of our sins, and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are a reproach to all that are round about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the supplication of thy servant, and his prayers: and shew thy face upon thy sanctuary which is desolate, for thy own sake. Incline, O my God, thy ear, and hear: open thy eyes, and see our desolation, and the city upon which thy name is called: for it is not for our justifications that we present our prayers before thy face, but for the multitude of thy tender mercies. O Lord, hear: O Lord, be appeased: hearken and do: delay not for thy own sake, O my God; because thy name is invocated upon thy city, and upon thy people.

## LXXXIV.—The Last Prophecy (*Daniel* ix 22-27)

And he instructed me, and spoke to me, and said: O Daniel, I am now come forth to teach thee, and that thou mightest understand. From the beginning of thy prayers the word came forth: and I am come to shew it to thee, because thou art a man of desires: therefore do thou mark the word, and understand the vision. Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the Saint of saints may be anointed. Know

thou therefore, and take notice, *that* from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times. And after sixty-two weeks, Christ shall be slain: and the people that shall deny him shall not be his. And a people, with their leader that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be waste; and after the end of the war the appointed desolation. And he shall confirm the covenant with many, in one week: and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail: and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation: and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation, and to the end.

# V.—SELECTIONS FROM THE MINOR PROPHETS

## Preliminary Note

TO understand the significance of the Minor Prophets it is necessary to enter into the mind of the Jews who preserved their writings, understand to some extent why they did so, and find in them that which they found in their interpretation. Now the mind of the Jews was filled with the idea of "him that was to come"; they preserved their old prophetic books, partly because of the teaching they contained, but much more because of the hints and allusions they gave to the discovery of the Messiah; and in their study they kept always before them this definite object. To them every word was prophetic in some sense, and it was the business of Scripture students to interpret it.

In making this selection, therefore, it seems more useful to follow another plan from that which has been hitherto followed. Taken by themselves, especially in translation, the Minor Prophets are both difficult to understand, and in themselves not interesting; but read in the mind of the Jews they at once become full of meaning and significance. We venture, then, in the first part here given, to select such passages as a Jew might have selected in or about the time of Jesus Christ.

## PART I.—SOME PROPHECIES OF CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM

### LXXXV.—He will Come while the Second Temple is still Standing (*Aggeus* ii 1-10)

In the four and twentieth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king, *they began*. *And* in the seventh month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Aggeus the prophet, saying: Speak to Zorobabel the son of Salathiel the governor of Juda, and to Jesus the son of Josedec the high priest, and to the rest of the people, saying: Who is left among you, that saw this house in its first glory? and how do you see it now? Is it not *in comparison to that* as nothing in your eyes? Yet now take courage, O Zorobabel, saith the Lord, and take courage, O Jesus the son of Josedec the high priest, and take courage, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord of hosts: and perform (for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts). The word that I covenanted with you when you came out of the land of Egypt: and my Spirit shall be in the midst of you: fear not. For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet one little while, and I will move the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will move all nations: *and the desired of all nations shall come:* and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. Great shall be the glory of this last house more than of the first, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place I will give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.

## LXXXVI.—He will Send his Angel before him (*Malachias* iii 1-4)

Behold I send my angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face. And presently the Lord, whom you seek, and the angel of the testament, whom you desire, shall come to his temple. Behold he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts. And who shall be able to think of the day of his coming? and who shall stand to see him? for he is like a refining fire, and like the fuller's herb. And he shall sit refining and cleansing the silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and shall refine them as gold, and as silver, and they shall offer sacrifices to the Lord in justice. And the sacrifice of Juda and of Jerusalem shall please the Lord, as in the days of old, and in the ancient years.

[Cf. *Matthew* xi 7-10:

And when they went their way, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: What went you out into the desert to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out to see? a man clothed in soft garments? Behold they that are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings. But what went you out to see? a prophet? yea I tell you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written: "Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee."]

## LXXXVII.—He will be Born in Bethlehem (*Micheas* v 1-6)

Now shalt thou be laid waste, O daughter of the robber: they have laid siege against us, with a rod shall they strike the cheek of the judge of Israel. And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands

of Juda: out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and his going forth *is* from the beginning, from the days of eternity. Therefore will he give them up even till the time wherein she that travaileth shall bring forth and the remnant of his brethren shall be converted to the children of Israel. And he shall stand, and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the height of the name of the Lord his God: and they shall be converted, for now shall he be magnified even to the ends of the earth. And this man shall be *our* peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall set his foot in our houses; and we shall raise against him seven shepherds and eight principal men. And they shall feed the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nemrod with the spears thereof: and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian when he shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our borders.

[Cf. *Matthew* ii 4-6:

And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet: "And thou Bethlehem the land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel."

Cf. *John* vii 40-43:

Of that multitude therefore, when they had heard these words of his, some said: This is the prophet indeed. Others said: This is the Christ. But some said: Doth the CHRIST come out of Galilee? Doth not the Scripture say: That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem the town where David was? So there arose a dissension among the people because of him.]

## LXXXVIII.—He will Come out of Egypt (*Osee* xi 1-5)

As the morning passeth, so hath the King of Israel passed away. Because Israel was a child, and I loved him; and I called my son out of Egypt. As they called them, they went away from before their face; they offered victims to Baalim, and sacrificed to idols. And I was like a foster-father to Ephraim: I carried them in my arms: and they knew not that I healed them. I will draw them with the cords of Adam, with the bands of love: and I will be to them as one that taketh off the yoke on their jaws: and I put his meat to him that he might eat. He shall not return into the land of Egypt: but the Assyrian shall be his king: because they would not be converted.

[Cf. *Matthew* ii 14-15:

Who arose, and took the child and his mother by night, and retired into Egypt: and he was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: " Out of Egypt have I called my son."]

## LXXXIX.—He will Establish a New Law (*Osee* ii 14-24)

Behold I will allure her, and will lead her into the wilderness: and I will speak to her heart. And I will give her vine-dressers out of the same place, and the valley of Achor for an opening of hope: and she shall sing there according to the days of her youth, and according to the days of her coming up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be in that day, saith the Lord, *that* she shall call me My husband: and she shall call me no more Baali. And I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and she shall no more remember their name. And in that day I will make a covenant with them, with the beasts

of the field, and with the fowls of the air, and with the creeping things of the earth: and I will destroy the bow, and the sword, and war out of the land: and I will make them sleep secure. And I will espouse thee to me for ever: and I will espouse thee to me in justice, and judgement, and in mercy, and in commiserations. And I will espouse thee to me in faith: and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. And it shall come to pass in that day: I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens; and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and these shall hear Jezrahel. And I will sow her unto me in the earth: and I will have mercy on her that was without mercy. And I will say to that which was not my people: Thou art my people: and they shall say: Thou art my God.

[Cf. *Romans* ix 22-25:

What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, that he might shew the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he hath prepared unto glory? Even us, whom also he hath called, not only of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles. As in Osee he saith: " I will call that which was not my people, my people; and her that was not beloved, beloved: and her that had not obtained mercy, one that had obtained mercy."

Cf. 1 *Peter* ii 9-10:

But you are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people: that you may declare his virtues, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. " Who in time past were not a people: but are now the people of God. Who had not obtained mercy: but now have obtained mercy."]

## XC.—He will be the New High Priest (*Zacharias* vi 12-15)

And thou shalt speak to him, saying: Thus saith the Lord of hosts, saying: Behold a man, the Orient is his name: and under him shall he spring up, and shall build a temple to the Lord. Yea, he shall build a temple to the Lord: and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne: and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And the crowns shall be to Helem, and Tobias, and Idaias, and to Hem, the son of Sophonias, a memorial in the temple of the Lord. And they that are far off shall come and shall build in the temple of the Lord, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts sent me to you. But this shall come to pass, if hearing you will hear the voice of the Lord your God.

[Cf. *Luke* i 76-79:

And thou child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways. To give knowledge of salvation to his people, unto the remission of their sins. Through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which the Orient from on high hath visited us. To enlighten them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death: to direct our feet into the way of peace.]

## XCI.—He will Institute a New Sacrifice (*Malachias* i 10-11)

Who is there among you, that will shut the doors, and will kindle the fire on my altar gratis? I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For from the rising of the

sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts.

## XCII.—He will Come Riding on an Ass (*Zacharias* ix 9-10)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold thy King will come to thee, the just and saviour: he is poor, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will destroy the chariot out of Ephraim, and the horse out of Jerusalem, and the bow for war shall be broken: and he shall speak peace to the Gentiles, and his power shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers even to the end of the earth.

[Cf. *John* xii 14-16:

And Jesus found a young ass, and sat upon it, as it is written: Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy king cometh sitting on an ass's colt. These things his disciples did not know at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things to him.]

## XCIII.—He will be Rejected and Sold (*Zacharias* xi 12-13)

And I said to them: If it be good in your eyes, bring hither my wages: and if not, be quiet. And they weighed for my wages thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me: Cast it to the statuary, a handsome price, that I was prized at by them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver: and I cast them into the house of the Lord to the statuary.

[Cf. *Matthew* xxvii 9-10:

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremias the prophet, saying: "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the prices of him that was prized, whom they prized of the children of Israel. And they gave them unto the potter's field, as the Lord appointed to me.]

## XCIV.—He will be Crucified (*Zacharias* xii 10-11)

And I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of prayers: and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for an only son, and they shall grieve over him, as the manner is to grieve for the death of the first-born. In that day there shall be great lamentation in Jerusalem, like the lamentation of Adadremmon in the plain of Mageddon.

[Cf. *John* xix 37:

And again another scripture saith: "They shall look on him whom they pierced."]

## XCV.—He will be Crucified (*Zacharias* xiii 6-7)

And they shall say to him: What are these wounds in the midst of thy hands? And he shall say: With these I was wounded in the house of them that loved me. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that cleaveth to me, saith the Lord of hosts: strike the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn my hand to the little ones.

[Cf. *Matthew* xxvi 31:

Then Jesus saith to them: All you shall be scandalised in me this night. For it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed."]

## XCVI.—He shall Restore All Things
(*Micheas* iv 1-7)

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared in the top of mountains, and high above the hills: and people shall flow to it. And many nations shall come in haste, and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth out of Sion, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into spades: nations shall not take sword against nation: neither shall they learn war any more. And every man shall sit under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and there shall be none to make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god: but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever. In that day, saith the Lord, I will gather up her that halteth: and her that I had cast out, I will gather up: and her whom I had afflicted. And I will make her that halted, a remnant: and her that had been afflicted, a mighty nation: and the Lord will reign over them in Mount Sion, from this time now and for ever.

[Cf. *Luke* i 32:

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father: and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever.]

## PART II.—OTHER PASSAGES

### XCVII.—Complaint of Israel (*Osee* vi 1-7; vii 1)

In their affliction they will rise early to me: Come, and let us return to the Lord: for he hath taken us, and he will heal us: he will strike, and he will cure us. He will revive us after two days: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. We shall know, and we shall follow on, that we may know the Lord. His going forth is prepared as the morning light: and he will come to us as the early and the latter rain to the earth. What shall I do to thee, O Ephraim? What shall I do to thee, O Juda? Your mercy is as a morning cloud, and as the dew that goeth away in the morning. For this reason have I hewed *them* by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgements shall go forth as the light. For I desired mercy and not sacrifice: and the knowledge of God more than holocausts. But they, like Adam, have transgressed the covenant, there have they dealt treacherously against me. When I would have healed Israel, the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria, for they have committed falsehood.

### XCVIII.—A Prayer for Mercy (*Joel* ii 1-17)

Blow ye the trumpet in Sion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain, let all the inhabitants of the land tremble because the day of the Lord cometh, because it is nigh at hand. A day of darkness, and of gloominess, a day of clouds and whirlwinds: a numerous and strong people as the morning spread upon the mountains: the like to it hath not been from the beginning, nor shall be after it even to the years of generation and generation. Before the face thereof a devouring fire, and behind it a burning

flame: the land is like a garden of pleasure before it, and behind it a desolate wilderness, neither is there any one that can escape it. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses, and they shall run like horsemen. They shall leap like the noise of chariots upon the tops of mountains, like the noise of a flame of fire devouring the stubble, as a strong people prepared to battle. At their presence the people shall be in grievous pains: all faces shall be made like a kettle. They shall run like valiant men: like men of war they shall scale the wall: the men shall march every one on his way, and they shall not turn aside from their ranks. No one shall press upon his brother: they shall walk everyone in his path: yea, and they shall fall through the windows, and shall take no harm. They shall enter into the city: they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up the houses, they shall come in at the windows as a thief. At their presence the earth hath trembled, the heavens are moved: the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars have withdrawn their shining. And the Lord hath uttered his voice before the face of his army; for his armies are exceeding great, for they are strong and execute his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible: and who can stand it? Now therefore saith the Lord: Be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning. And rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, patient and rich in mercy, and ready to repent of the evil. Who knoweth but he will return, and forgive, and leave a blessing behind him, sacrifice and libation to the Lord your God? Blow the trumpet in Sion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. Gather together the people, sanctify the church, assemble the ancients, gather together the little ones, and them that suck at the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth from his bed, and the bride out of her bride chamber. Between the porch and the altar the priests the Lord's ministers shall weep, and shall

say: Spare, O Lord, spare thy people: and give not thy inheritance to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them. Why should they say among the nations: Where is their God?

## XCIX.—The Final Judgement (*Joel* ii 28-32)

And it shall come to pass after this, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy: your old men shall dream dreams; and your young men shall see visions. Moreover upon my servants and handmaids in those days I will pour forth my Spirit. And I will shew wonders in heaven; and in earth, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood; before the great and dreadful day of the Lord doth come. And it shall come to pass, that every one that shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved: for in Mount Sion, and in Jerusalem shall be salvation, as the Lord hath said, and in the residue whom the Lord shall call.

## C.—Woe to Israel (*Amos* v 1-8)

Hear ye this word, which I take up concerning you for a lamentation. The house of Israel is fallen: and it shall rise no more. The virgin of Israel is cast down upon her land, there is none to raise her up. For thus saith the Lord God: The city, out of which came forth a thousand, there shall be left in it a hundred: and out of which there came a hundred, there shall be left in it ten, in the house of Israel. For thus saith the Lord to the house of Israel: Seek ye me, and you shall live. But seek not Bethel, and go not into Galgal, neither shall you pass over to Bersabee: for Galgal shall go into captivity, and Bethel shall be unprofitable. Seek ye the Lord, and live, lest the house of Joseph be burnt with fire, and it shall devour, and there shall be none to quench Bethel. You that turn

judgement into wormwood, and forsake justice in the land, seek him that maketh Arcturus and Orion, and that turneth darkness into morning, and that changeth day into night: that calleth the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The Lord is his name.

## CI.—Amos Rejected (*Amos* vii 10-17)

And Amasias the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying: Amos hath rebelled against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus saith Amos: Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall be carried away captive out of their own land. And Amasias said to Amos: Thou seer, go, flee away into the land of Juda, and eat bread there, and prophesy there. But prophesy not again any more in Bethel: because it is the king's sanctuary, and it is the house of the kingdom. And Amos answered, and said to Amasias: I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet: but I am a herdsman plucking wild figs. And the Lord took me when I followed the flock, and the Lord said to me: Go, prophesy to my people Israel. And now hear thou the word of the Lord. Thou sayest, thou shalt not prophesy against Israel, and thou shalt not drop *thy word* upon the house of the idol. Therefore thus saith the Lord: Thy wife shall play the harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be measured by a line: and thou shalt die in a polluted land, and Israel shall go into captivity out of their land.

## CII.—God will Forgive (*Micheas* vii 18-20)

Who is a God like to thee, who takest away iniquity, and passeth by the sin of the remnant of thy inheritance? he will send his fury in no more, because he delighteth in

mercy. He will turn again, and have mercy on us: he will put away our iniquities: and he will cast all our sins into the bottom of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, the mercy to Abraham; which thou hast sworn to our fathers from the days of old.

### CIII.—The Curse of Ninive (*Nahum* iii 1-19)

Woe to thee, O city of blood, all full of lies and violence: rapine shall not depart from thee. The noise of the whip and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the neighing horse, and of the running chariot, and of the horsemen coming up: and of the shining sword, and of the glittering spear, and of a multitude slain and of a grievous destruction: and there is no end of carcases, and they shall fall down on their dead bodies. Because of the multitude of the fornications of the harlot that was beautiful and agreeable, and that made use of witchcraft, that sold nations through her fornications, and families through her witchcrafts. Behold I *come* against thee, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will shew thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to kingdoms. And I will cast abominations upon thee, and will disgrace thee, and will make an example of thee. And it shall come to pass that every one that shall see thee shall flee from thee and shall say: Ninive is laid waste: Who shall bemoan thee? Whence shall I seek a comforter for thee? . . . Thy destruction is not hidden, thy wound is grievous: all that have heard the fame of thee have clapped their hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

### CIV.—The Restoration (*Zacharias* ii 1-11)

And I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. And I said: Whither goest thou? And he said to me: To measure Jerusalem

and to see how great is the breadth thereof, and how great is the length thereof. And behold the angel that spoke in me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him. And he said to him: Run, speak to this young man, saying: Jerusalem shall be inhabited without walls, by reason of the multitude of men, and of the beasts in the midst thereof. And I will be to it, saith the Lord, a wall of fire round about: and I will be in glory in the midst thereof. O, O flee ye out of the land of the north, saith the Lord, for I have scattered you into the four winds of heaven, saith the Lord. O Sion, flee thou that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. For thus saith the Lord of hosts: after the glory, he hath sent me to the nations that have robbed you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of my eye. For behold I lift up my hand upon them, and they shall be a prey to those that served them: and you shall know that the Lord of hosts sent me. Sing praise and rejoice, O daughter of Sion: for behold I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee: saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day: and they shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee. And thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts sent me to thee.

## VI.—SELECTIONS FROM THE BOOKS OF MACHABEES

### CV.—The Persecution of Antiochus (1 *Machabees* i 43-56)

AND king Antiochus wrote to all his kingdom, that all the people should be one: and every one should leave his own law. And all nations consented according to the word of king Antiochus. And many of Israel consented to his service, and they sacrificed to idols, and profaned the Sabbath. And the king sent letters by the hands of messengers to Jerusalem, and to all the cities of Juda: that they should follow the law of the nations of the earth, and should forbid holocausts and sacrifices, and atonements to be made in the temple of God, and should prohibit the Sabbath, and the festival days, to be celebrated. And he commanded the holy places to be profaned, and the holy people of Israel. And he commanded altars to be built, and temples, and idols, and swine's flesh to be immolated, and unclean beasts. And that they should leave their children uncircumcised, and let their souls be defiled with all uncleannesses, and abominations, to the end that they should forget the law, and should change all the justifications of God. And that whosoever would not do according to the word of king Antiochus should be put to death. According to all these words he wrote to his whole kingdom: and he appointed rulers over the people that should force them to do these things. And they commanded the cities of Juda to sacrifice. Then many of the people were gathered to them that had forsaken the law of the Lord: and they

committed evils in the land. And they drove away the people of Israel into lurking holes, and into the secret places of fugitives.

## CVI.—The Death of Antiochus
## (1 *Machabees* vi 5-16)

And whilst he was in Persia, there came one that told him, how the armies that were in the land of Juda were put to flight: and that Lysias went with a very great power, and was put to flight before the face of the Jews, and that they were grown strong by the armour, and power, and store of spoils, which they had gotten out of the camps which they had destroyed: and that they had thrown down the abomination which he had set up upon the altar in Jerusalem, and that they had compassed about the sanctuary with high walls as before, and Bethsura also his city. And it came to pass when the king heard these words, that he was struck with fear, and exceedingly moved, and he laid himself down upon his bed, and fell sick for grief, because it had not fallen out to him as he imagined. And he remained there many days: for great grief came more and more upon him, and he made account that he should die. And he called for all his friends, and said to them: Sleep is gone from my eyes, and I am fallen away, and my heart is cast down for anxiety. And I said in my heart: Into how much tribulation am I come, and into what floods of sorrow, wherein now I am: I that was pleasant and beloved in my power. But now I remember the evils that I have done in Jerusalem, from whence also I took away all the spoils of gold and of silver that were in it, and I sent to destroy the inhabitants of Juda without cause. I know therefore that for this cause these evils have found me: and behold I perish with great grief in a strange land. Then he called Philip, one of his friends, and he made him regent over all his kingdom. And he gave him the crown, and his robe, and his

ring, that he should go to Antiochus his son, and should bring him up for the kingdom. So king Antiochus died there in the year one hundred and forty-nine.

## CVII.—The Treaty with Rome (1 *Machabees* viii 19-29)

And they went to Rome, a very long journey, and they entered into the senate-house, and said: Judas Machabeus, and his brethren, and the people of the Jews have sent us to you to make alliance and peace with you, and that we may be registered your confederates and friends. And the proposal was pleasing in their sight. And this is the copy of the writing that they wrote back again, graven in tables of brass, and sent to Jerusalem, that it might be with them there for a memorial of the peace and alliance. Good success be to the Romans, and to the people of the Jews, by sea and by land for ever: and far be the sword and enemy from them. But if there come first any war upon the Romans, or any of their confederates, in all their dominions: the nation of the Jews shall help them according as the time shall direct, with all their hearts: neither shall they give them, whilst they are fighting, or furnish them with wheat, or arms, or money, or ships, as it hath seemed good to the Romans: and they shall obey their orders, without taking anything of them. In like manner also if war shall come first upon the nation of the Jews, the Romans shall help them with all their heart, according as the time shall permit them. And there shall not be given to them that come to their aid, either wheat, or arms, or money, or ships, as it hath seemed good to the Romans: and they shall observe their orders without deceit. According to these articles did the Romans covenant with the people of the Jews.

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## CVIII.—The Treaty with the Spartans (1 *Machabees* xii 1-24)

And Jonathan saw that the time served him, and he chose certain men and sent them to Rome, to confirm and to renew the amity with them. And he sent letters to the Spartans, and to other places according to the same form. And they went to Rome, and entered into the senate-house, and said: Jonathan the high priest and the nation of the Jews have sent us to renew the amity and alliance as it was before. And they gave them letters to their governors in every place, to conduct them into the land of Juda with peace. And this is a copy of the letters which Jonathan wrote to the Spartans: Jonathan the high priest, and the ancients of the nation, and the priests, and the rest of the people of the Jews, to the Spartans, their brethren, greeting. There were letters sent long ago to Onias the high priest from Arius who reigned then among you, to signify that you are our brethren, as the copy here underwritten doth specify. And Onias received the ambassador with honour and received the letters wherein there was mention made of the alliance and amity. We, though we needed none of these things, having for our comfort the holy books that are in our hands, chose rather to send to you to renew the brotherhood and friendship, lest we should become strangers to you altogether: for there is a long time passed since you sent to us. We therefore at all times without ceasing, both in our festivals, and other days wherein it is convenient, remember you in the sacrifices that we offer, and in our observances, as it is meet and becoming to remember brethren. And we rejoice at your glory. But we have had many troubles and wars on every side, and the kings that are round about us, have fought against us. But we would not be troublesome to you, nor to the rest of our allies and friends in these wars.

For we have had help from heaven, and we have been delivered, and our enemies are humbled. We have chosen therefore Numenius the son of Antiochus, and Antipater the son of Jason, and have sent them to the Romans to renew with them former amity and alliance. And we have commanded them to go also to you, and to salute you, and to deliver you our letters, concerning the renewing of our brotherhood. And now you shall do well to give us an answer hereto. And this is the copy of the letter which he had sent to Onias: Arius king of the Spartans to Onias the high priest, greeting. It is found in writing concern- the Spartans and the Jews, that they are brethren, and that they are of the stock of Abraham. And now since this is come to our knowledge, you do well to write to us of your prosperity. And we also have written back to you, that our cattle, and our possessions, are yours: and yours, ours. We therefore have commanded that these things should be told you. Now Jonathan heard that the generals of Demetrius were come again with a greater army than before to fight against him.

## CIX.—The Government of Simon
## (1 *Machabees* xiv 4-15)

And all the land of Juda was at rest all the days of Simon, and he sought the good of his nation: and his power and his glory pleased them well all his days. And with all his glory he took Joppe for a haven, and made an entrance to the isles of the sea. And he enlarged the bounds of his nation, and made himself master of the country. And he gathered together a great number of captives, and had the dominion of Gazara, and of Bethsura, and of the castle: and took away all uncleanness out of it, and there was none that resisted him. And every man tilled his land with peace: and the land of Juda yielded her increase, and the trees of the fields their fruit.

The ancient men sat all in the streets, and treated together of the good things of the land, and the young men put on them glory and the robes of war. And he provided victuals for the cities, and he appointed that they should be furnished with ammunition, so that the fame of his glory was renowned even to the end of the earth. He made peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy. And every man sat under his vine, and under his fig-tree: and there was none to make them afraid. There was none left in the land to fight against them, kings were discomfited in those days. And he strengthened all those of his people that were brought low, and he sought the law, and took away every unjust and wicked man. He glorified the sanctuary, and multiplied the vessels of the holy places.

## CX.—The Death of Simon
## (1 *Machabees* xvi 14-20)

Now Simon, as he was going through the cities that were in the country of Judea, and taking care for the good ordering of them, went down to Jericho, he and Mathathias and Judas his sons, in the year one hundred and seventy-seven, the eleventh month: the same is the month Sabath. And the son of Abobus received them deceitfully into a little fortress, that is called Doch, which he had built: and he made them a great feast, and hid men there. And when Simon and his sons had drunk plentifully, Ptolomee and his men rose up and took their weapons, and entered into the banqueting-place, and slew him, and his sons, and some of his servants. And he committed a great treachery in Israel, and rendered evil for good. And Ptolomee wrote these things, and sent to the king that he should send him an army to aid him, and he would deliver him the country, and their cities, and tributes. And he sent others to Gazara to kill John: and to the tribunes he sent letters to come to him, and

that he would give them silver, and gold, and gifts. And he sent others to take Jerusalem and the mountain of the temple.

## CXI.—The Humiliation of Heliodorus (2 *Machabees* iii 27-36)

And Heliodorus suddenly fell to the ground, and they took him up covered with great darkness, and having put him into a litter they carried him out. So he that came with many servants and all his guard into the aforesaid treasury was carried out, no one being able to help him, the manifest power of God being known. And he indeed by the power of God lay speechless, and without all hope of recovery. But they praised the Lord because he had glorified his place: and the temple, that a little before was full of fear and trouble, when the almighty Lord appeared, was filled with joy and gladness. Then some of the friends of Heliodorus forthwith begged of Onias, that he would call upon the Most High to grant him his life, who was ready to give up the ghost. So the high priest, considering that the king might perhaps suspect that some mischief had been done to Heliodorus by the Jews, offered a sacrifice of health for the recovery of the man. And when the high priest was praying, the same young men in the same clothing stood by Heliodorus, and said to him: Give thanks to Onias the priest: because for his sake the Lord hath granted thee life. And thou, having been scourged by God, declare unto all men the great works and the power of God. And having spoken thus, they appeared no more. So Heliodorus after he had offered a sacrifice to God, and made great vows to him, that had granted him life, and given thanks to Onias, taking his troops with him, returned to the king. And he testified to all men the works of the great God, which he had seen with his own eyes.

## CXII.—The Story of Eleazar (2 *Machabees* vi 18-31)

Eleazar one of the chief of the Scribes, a man advanced in years, and of a comely countenance, was pressed to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh. But he, choosing rather a most glorious death than a hateful life, went forward voluntarily to the torment. And considering in what manner he was come to it, patiently bearing, he determined not to do any unlawful things for the love of life. But they that stood by, being moved with wicked pity, for the old friendship they had with the man, taking him aside, desired that flesh might be brought, which it was lawful for him to eat, that he might make as if he had eaten, as the king had commanded, of the flesh of the sacrifice: that by so doing he might be delivered from death: and for the sake of their old friendship with the man they did him this courtesy. But he began to consider the dignity of his age, and his ancient years, and the inbred honour of his grey head, and his good life and conversation from a child: and he answered without delay, according to the ordinances of the holy law made by God, saying, that he would rather be sent into the other world. For it doth not become our age, said he, to dissemble; whereby many young persons might think that Eleazar, at the age of fourscore and ten years, was gone over to the life of the heathens: and so they, through my dissimulation, and for a little time of a corruptible life, should be deceived, and hereby I should bring a stain and a curse upon my old age. For though, for the present time, I should be delivered from the punishments of men, yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty neither alive nor dead. Wherefore by departing manfully out of this life, I shall shew myself worthy of my old age: and I shall leave an example of fortitude to young men, if with a ready mind and constancy I suffer an honourable death, for the most venerable and most holy laws. And

having spoken thus, he was forthwith carried to execution. And they that led him, and had been a little before more mild, were changed to wrath for the words he had spoken, which they thought were uttered out of arrogancy. But when he was now ready to die with the stripes, he groaned, and said: O Lord, who hast the holy knowledge, thou knowest manifestly that whereas I might be delivered from death, I suffer grievous pains in body: but in soul am well content to suffer these things because I fear thee. Thus did this man die, leaving not only to young men, but also to the whole nation, the memory of his death for an example of virtue and fortitude.

## CXIII.—The Purification of the Temple (2 *Machabees* x 1-9)

But Machabeus, and they that were with him, by the protection of the Lord, recovered the temple and the city again. But he threw down the altars, which the heathens had set up in the streets, as also the temples of the idols. And having purified the temple, they made another altar: and taking fire out of the fiery stones they offered sacrifices after two years, and set forth incense, and lamps, and the loaves of proposition. And when they had done these things they besought the Lord, lying prostrate on the ground, that they might no more fall into such evils; but if they should at any time sin, that they might be chastised by him more gently, and not be delivered up to barbarians and blasphemous men. Now upon the same day that the temple had been polluted by the strangers, on the very same day it was cleansed again, to wit, on the five and twentieth day of the month of Casleu. And they kept eight days with joy, after the manner of the feast of the tabernacles, remembering that not long before they had kept the feast of the tabernacles when they were in the mountains, and in dens like wild beasts. Therefore they now carried boughs, and great

branches, and palms for him that had given them good success in cleansing his place. And they ordained by a common statute and decree, that all the nation of the Jews should keep those days every year. And this was the end of Antiochus that was called the Illustrious.

## CXIV.—Prayer for the Dead (2 *Machabees* xii 42-46)

And so betaking themselves to prayers, they besought him, that the sin which had been committed might be forgotten. But the most valiant Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin, forasmuch as they saw before their eyes what had happened, because of the sins of those that were slain. And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection, (for if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead,) and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.

## CXV.—Victory of Machabeus (2 *Machabees* xv 20-27)

And now when all expected what judgement would be given, and the enemy were at hand, and the army was set in array, the beasts and the horsemen ranged in convenient places, Machabeus considering the coming of the multitude, and the divers preparations of armour, and the fierceness of the beasts, stretching out his hands to heaven, called upon the Lord, that worketh wonders, who giveth victory to them that are worthy, not according to the power of their arms, but according as it seemeth

good to him. And in his prayer he said after this manner: Thou, O Lord, who didst send thy angel in the time of Ezechias king of Juda, and didst kill a hundred and eighty-five thousands of the army of Sennacherib: send now also, O Lord of heaven, thy good angel before us, for the fear and dread of the greatness of thy arm, that they may be afraid, who come with blasphemy against thy holy people. And thus he concluded his prayer. But Nicanor and they that were with him came forward, with trumpets and songs. But Judas and they that were with him encountered them, calling upon God by prayers. So fighting with their hands, but praying to the Lord with their hearts, they slew no less than five and thirty thousand, being greatly cheered with the presence of God.

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